

The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

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BROOKLYN HEIGHTS-DOWNTOWN EDITION
INCLUDING DUMBO

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CASE DISMISSED

Judge: Eminent domain suit 'baseless'

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

A federal judge this week dismissed the central lawsuit against Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards, striking a major blow to opponents of the \$4-billion, arena, residential, retail and office skyscraper project.

The costly lawsuit — officially known as *Goldstein v. Putali*, taking the name of its lead plaintiff, Daniel Goldstein of Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn, and the former governor — sought to challenge the government's right to seize privately owned property and turn it over to a private developer, seizing on a line of attack left open by the Supreme Court's controversial 2005 Kelo decision.

In that watershed 5-4 ruling, the High Court upheld the right of governments to seize property long as the private project served a public purpose and had been "carefully considered" — two legal requirements that Ratner's

"Jobs, Housing and Hoops" scheme did not meet, the dismissed suit charged.

Brooklyn District Court Judge Nicholas Garaufis ruled that the plaintiffs — 13 condemned property owners, including the management of Freddy's Bar on Dean Street — hadn't shown "sufficient" evidence that the developer, or the Empire State Development Corporation, which condemned land for the project, had abused the government's power to take private property.

Garaufis said that while the ESDC and the developer may have overstated the public benefit of the glitzy, Frank Gehry-designed development, there was still enough benefit to legitimate the taking.

"The project will create large quantities of housing and office space, as well as a sports arena, in an area that is mostly



Bruce Ratner's win in court is a big loss for foes like Daniel Goldstein (r.).

blighted," he wrote, adding that the plaintiff's allegation that the public would not benefit from Atlantic Yards is "baseless."

State officials cheered the decision, which affirmed a February recommendation by a special judicial master that the federal case should be dismissed and refilled in state court.

"This is yet another instance in which the project has stood up to legal scrutiny,"

said ESDC spokesman Enol Cockfield.

Plaintiffs' attorney Matthew Brinckhoff said he would appeal the ruling.

"We are confident that the appellate court will allow this case to proceed to trial ... [where] the citizens of New York will finally learn the real reason plaintiffs' properties were selected to be forcibly taken," Brinckhoff said.

While several cases against Atlantic Yards are pending, the case dismissed was the only challenge specifically focused on the state's use of eminent domain, and the only challenge that had a chance of blocking the project completely.

An expert on governmental takings, Steven Anderson of the anti-eminent domain Institute for Justice, said Brinckhoff had a tough road ahead of him.

"New York law isn't written in favor of homeowners or small businesses," Anderson said. "It favors the beneficiaries of eminent domain."

Ratner declined a request to comment on the big win.



The Brooklyn Paper / Courtesy of ZenChien

Coney wants 1 more ride

By Christopher Cascarano
for The Brooklyn Paper

Coney Island's historic Astroland Park did the tilt-a-whirl this week — first putting all its rides up for sale, then apparently pulling them back as elected officials scrambled to give the doomed amusement park one last ride.

The topsy-turvy week started with the 44-year-old funland posting its rides — including Dante's Inferno, the water flume, and the dreaded Pirate Ship, but not the city-owned landmark Cyclone rollercoaster, of course — on a carry auction Web site, *Ital International*.

The move was not a surprise, given that late last year, a real-estate developer bought the land under Astroland from the Albert family and announced that the amusement park would be razed after the 2007 season.

So the real surprise came a few days later, when Carol Albert abruptly announced that the rides were no longer for sale — and that she was desperate to find vacant lots near the fabled Boardwalk, to house Astroland for another season or two.

Elected officials moved to lend their support moral and otherwise.

"Astroland and the Albert family have helped define Coney Island's unique character over the last half-century," said Borough President Markowitz. "And we are working with them and the city to find the best way for them to continue to contribute to its bright future."

Others have a different vision of that bright future. Joe Sitt's Thor Equities bought the As-



A young tie enjoys the carousel at Astroland, one of the three-dozen rides for sale at the soon-to-close funland.

troland site late last year to level and build a \$2-billion Vegas-style amusement-condo complex.

Thor's theme park would include movie theaters, beachfront luxury condos, a 150-foot waterslide, a multi-level carousel, and first new roller coaster since the Cyclone was built in 1927.

To build his Xanadu, Sitt needs a city rezoning — one that city officials have been reluctant to give, though negotiations continue. Neither Sitt nor city officials would comment on those talks for this article.

In the meantime, the Albert family and its supporters spent this week hoping to find a new place for the fun, eyeing three empty lots on the Boardwalk, sources said.

"I know the spaces, and they've been empty for years," said Stan Fox, a coin-operated game distributor who volunteers at the Coney Island History Project. "Astroland can grow at the other locations. We need more amusements, not less."

Fortunately for Astroland, the city appears eager to help the family-run park live on.

"We are working with Carol Albert to identify a temporary site ... and we hope we will be successful," said Janet Patterson, a spokeswoman for the city Economic Development Corporation.

Despite all the frenetic activity, all of Albert's rides remain on the *Ital Web* site, with prices ranging from \$25,000 to \$500,000. "Cars are waiting to see what options present themselves," said Chuck Reichenthal, district manager of Community Board 13.

City puts vendors on Hook

The Brooklyn Paper

The Parks Department has told a much-loved group of Latin American food vendors that they will be booted from their positions around Red Hook Park if another group or corporation serves up higher permit fees.

More than a dozen mom and pop vendors have been doing out enclaves and ceviches for about 30 years around the once-seedy, now-popular park, and have paid the city seasonal permit fees of more than \$9,000.

But now the Parks Department



A Red Hook ballfields food vendor satisfies a customer, but for how long?

wants to put the permits up for open bid, raising the possibility that the vendors will be out after this summer.

"We want to standardize the permitting process, so the [Red Hook] vendors will have to go through the normal bidding process," said Parks Department spokesman Phil Abramson.

The open market has created a frenzy for permits in high-visibility areas like the plaza in front of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where a permit to sell hot dogs and pretzels costs \$320,000. But permits in less-trafficked

See VENDORS on page 14

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Megan Montgomery, arguably New York's first personal chef for dogs, prepares her haute canine cuisine in Downtown Brooklyn, with an 11-year-old terrier-and-Dachshund taste-tester named Milo and a firm belief that your dog is what he eats.

"The idea is a 'Dum and DeLaca for dogs,'" said Montgomery of her company, Zen Chien Personal Chef Service for Dogs.

She's not exaggerating. Her dishes seem to have come straight from a Smith Street menu: Mediterranean ground lamb, with whole wheat couscous, blueberries and fresh-grated squash; beefy macaroni with ground sirloin, sweet peas, sardines, and organic tomato sauce; Caribbean chicken, with shredded, free-range meat, jasmine brown rice, finely chopped mango and grated zucchini.

Mouthwatering? Hang on: it's for dogs! But humans love it, too.

"I do taste the food as I cook it," said Montgomery, who works out of her Duffield Street home. She adds calcium-rich ground bone-meal, omega-6 and -3, vitamin B-12, and multivitamins to make sure ZenChien food is extra healthy for pups.

"Nothing goes into it that I would not eat myself, with the exception of sardines, and that is just because I don't like them."

But Milo does. He's Montgomery's official food-taster ... and guinea pig.

"I also gave samples to friends and co-workers and asked for feedback," said Montgomery. "Did they notice a change in their level of enthusiasm after eating? Did it cause an upset stomach? Do they normally leave food in their bowl? Stuff like that. Most of all, I kept a close eye and still do on Milo's coat, muscle definition, weight, stool and teeth. I even sent in a blood sample to test his calcium level."

Fair enough. But to see whether a pup other than

Milo would like the gourmet eats, Montgomery hosted two noted canine gourmands: Agnes, a yellow chow, and Ginnar, a chocolate Lab.

Ginnar's owner, Corey Szopinski, warned that his dog, like the first President Bush, despises broccoli.

"Bananas, though, he will eat them until he explodes," Szopinski said. "I put a bowl of that food next to a bowl of dry food, he'd eat the bowl of wet food. And then he'd eat the bowl of dry food."

But Szopinski was doubtful Ginnar would become a full-time customer. Depending on dog-size, she

"I think he liked it," said Szopinski, of Ginnar.

The next course was macaroni, also, apparently, a rousing success, with the dogs wolfing down the meal like, well, like wolves rather than dogs.

"Ginnar definitely liked it," Szopinski said. "If I put a bowl of that food next to a bowl of dry food, he'd eat the bowl of wet food. And then he'd eat the bowl of dry food."

But Szopinski was doubtful Ginnar would become a full-time customer. Depending on dog-size, she

service runs between \$8 and \$18 a day.

"I might do it every once in a while, just to mix things up," said Szopinski. "But I don't think I could afford to do it every week."

Jeff Cetan said Agnes was a fan, too. "She loves fresh food. There's a noticeable pleasure difference."

Cretan concocted the idea for ZenChien after Milo was diagnosed with a hip tumor in 2005.

"When I asked my vet if there was anything I could do, he didn't have many answers," recalled Montgomery. "I did an investigation ... and I started cooking for Milo in January, 2006. He's had no tumor regrowth since then."

And, to those who think the cost is simply too high, Montgomery counters with this: "Dogs love unconditionally, and ZenChien offers a healthy vehicle to return the unconditional love of a dog through exceptional food."



Megan Montgomery and Milo

CONEY ISLAND HAS A NEW HOT DOG: JOEY CHESTNUT!

これでどうだ!日本!
(Eat this, Japan!)

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

American eating phenom Joey Chestnut — who finished a close second to world champion Takeru Kobayashi at last July's hot dog-eating contest at Coney Island — has chopped right through Kobayashi's all-time record, downing 59-1/2 hot dogs and buns last week in a regional qualifying heat in Arizona.

The stunning consumption of Chestnut — whose personal best before Saturday was 52 HDBs last July 4 — makes Kobayashi something he's never been before: the underdog at the annual Independence Day contest at Nathan's in Coney Island.

Some are calling Chestnut's 59-1/2 HDB performance the greatest achievement in the history of human competition.

"It's the greatest achievement in the history of human competition," said George Shea, chairman of the International Federation of Competitive Eating, the governing body of all stomach-challenged sports.

"I saw the 1969 Super Bowl. I saw Michael Jordan's three-peat (although, admittedly, I was getting a sandwich during one of thepeats). I saw Secretariat win the Belmont by 31 lengths. What Chestnut has done make the eating achievements look like a one-run

See CHESTNUT on page 6



Never world record holder Gersh Kuntzman questioned Chestnut's reliance on air conditioning.

59.5*

Chestnut's 'record' is tainted by modern air conditioning

IT DOESN'T TAKE ANYTHING away from world-record-holding eater Joey Chestnut to say that his 59-1/2 hot dog and bun achievement last week is a joke.

"I do Bob Beamon's wind-aided 1968 Olympic long jump in the thin air of Mexico City, Barry Bond's 'clear' and 'crum'—aided 73 homer season in 2001, or Roger Maris's eight-extra-game home-run season in 1961. Chestnut's 59-1/2 HDB record should have an asterisk — at least until he repeats the 'achievement' under actual game

conditions. Without air conditioning, I mean.

Certainly Chestnut is one of history's greatest eaters. But the full impact of what he did last Saturday in an air-conditioned shopping mall outside of

See ASTERISK on page 6

“think green”



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WHERE TO

EDITORS' PICKS

SATURDAY June 9	SUNDAY June 10	TUESDAY June 12	THURSDAY June 14	FRIDAY June 15
In the 'Jungle' Park Slope's Puppet-works is staging an all-marionette version of Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book," a kid-friendly story that follows Mowgli (pictured) and his adventures in the jungle. You won't need to pull strings to get in though, the show is running on alternate Saturdays through August. 12:30 and 2:30 pm at Puppet-works (330 5th Ave., at Fourth Street in Park Slope). \$7 for kids, \$8 for adults. For information, call (718) 965-3391.	Feeling Moody Rick Moody, author of "The Ice Storm," comes to Proteus Gownaus today, but not for a reading. Musical Moody, who also sings with the Wingdale Community Singers, is teaming up with artist Nina Katchadourian to perform "a PowerPoint presentation in song." 7 pm at Proteus Gownaus (943 Union St., at Nevins Street in Carroll Gardens). \$5. For information, visit www.proteusgownaus.com .	Park it With bathing suit season upon us, the fine folks at the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy are offering free exercise classes to anyone who's in need of a tone up. Today's class focuses on plyometrics, exercises that use the weight of your body to create resistance during explosive movements. 7 pm at the Boardwalk in Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park. Free. For information, call (718) 832-0603. Bring your own mat!	Girls on film Tonight, Hadassah Brooklyn hosts "Princesses and Yentas," a panel discussion on the portrayal of Jewish women in film, stage and TV. Local actors, writers, casting directors and producers will be speaking as part of the panel. Get there early — a light kosher dinner will be served. 6 pm at Congregation Mt. Sinai (250 Cadman Plaza West between Tillary and Clark streets in Brooklyn Heights). \$25. For information, call (718) 382-6454.	Proud Mary Ex-Hellion front woman Mary Timony brings her band to Death by Audio tonight in support of their new record, "The Shapes We Make." Though she recently relocated from Boston to Washington, DC, Timony hasn't lost the sharp wit or strange, mystical lyrics that she's known for. 8 pm at Death by Audio (58 Second St., at Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg). \$8. For information, visit www.todaysny.com .

NINE DAYS IN BROOKLYN

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal Jay

SAT, JUNE 9

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

EARLY MORNING BIRDING: Morning bird walk around the Salt Marsh Nature Center's Nature Trail. Open to all levels of birders. 8 am. 3302 Avenue U. (718) 421-2021. Free.

INDE MARKET: Collective of Brooklyn-based emerging designers show their wares of fashion, accessories, bath and beauty, pet gear, home goods and more. 11 am to 7 pm. Smith and Union Street. www.brooklynindemarket.com.

LULLWATER EXPLORATION: Enjoy a boat tour detailing Prospect Park's aquatic habitat. Binoculars provided. \$10, \$5 kids. Noon to 12:45 pm. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400.

STUDIO TOUR: Annual Best Hook! Carroll Gardens open studio tour. Self-guided tour features over 100 artists and special events, including gallery openings, live music, book readings and more. Noon to 5 pm. 497 Van Brunt St. Call for info. (718) 832-0496.

BIRDS OF PREY: Urban Park Rangers hosts a tour of Lookout Hill in search of hawks and falcons. 1 pm. Meet at Wolman Park, near the Lincoln Road entrance to Prospect Park. For info, call 311. Free.

GARDEN TEA: Crown Heights North Association hosts its annual walking tour and garden tea event. \$20. 1 pm. St. Gregory's Church, 991 St. Johns Pl., near Brooklyn Avenue. (718) 756-1920.

ART WALK: Atlantic Avenue hosts its annual event featuring local artists. 1 pm to 6 pm. For info, visit www.atlanticavenueartwalk.com.

GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY: Civil War Project highlights the veterans buried at this landmark cemetery. Historian Jeff Richmond leads tour. \$10, \$5 for members. 1 pm. Also, Big Ocean Walk hosts a tour. \$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 students. 1 pm. Meet at main entrance, 26th Street and Fifth Avenue. (631) 549-4891.

PEDAL BOATING: Cruise Brooklyn's freshwater lake in a pedal boat. \$15 for one hour, \$10 for 30 minutes. Noon to 5 pm. Enter Prospect Park near the Parkside and Ocean Avenue entrance.

PERFORMANCE

OPERA: Champagne and Candlelight Opera & Camera presents "The Marriage of Figaro." Brooklyn Public Library's Brooklyn Heights branch, 280 Cadman Plaza West. (718) 623-7100. Free.

BOOK THEATER: presents a 1930s style musical murder mystery. Dinner at Presely Eight-Thirteen. 1:30 pm. 575 Metropolitan Avenue. Call for ticket info. (718) 907-6189.

BROOKLYN LYCEUM: Mozart and DaPonte's comedy "Così fan tutte: A School for Lovers." \$20, \$10 students and seniors. 2 pm. 227 Fourth Ave. (718) 398-7301.

REHEARSAL: St. Jacob's hosts a rehearsal of "Messiah" — community sing-along. Performance is Sunday, June 10.

Rehearsal from 3 pm to 5 pm. 5406 Fourth Ave. (718) 439-8978. Free.

OPERA: Regina Opera Company presents a fully staged production of Puccini's "Tosca." 7 pm. Regina Hall, corner of 65th Street and 12th Avenue. (718) 232-3555.

651 ARTS: presents "Scourge," a look at Haiti. Artist activist Marc Bernuthi Joseph. 6 pm. Call (718) 596-5410.

CIVIC CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JUNE 14

Community Board 11 full board. Holy Family Home (1740 84th St., between 17th and New Utrecht avenues). 7:30 pm. Call (718) 266-8800.

Community Education Council District 15. 65-85 54th Avenue, between 18th and 19th streets. 7-9 pm. Call (718) 935-4267.

Brooklyn Democrats for Change. Union Church Parish House (8101 Ridge Blvd., between 8th and 9th streets). 7:30 pm. For information, go to www.brooklynDemocratsforchange.org.

To list an event in the Civic Calendar, email news@brooklynpaper.com or fax (718) 834-9378.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13

Community Board 2 full board. Brown Memorial Baptist Church (527 Gates Ave., between Waverly and Washington avenues). 7:30 pm. Call (718) 748-1797 for info.

Fifth Avenue BID Steering Committee and Park Slope FIB Avenue Merchants Association weekly meeting. Call (718) 871-8340 for meeting time and location.

72nd Precinct Community Council. Mariem Heim Center (4520 Fourth Ave., at 45th Street). 7:30 pm. Call (718) 965-6311.

TUESDAY, JUNE 12

Dyker Heights Civic Association. St. Philip's Church Hall (11th Avenue at 89th Street). 8 pm. Call (718) 858-4699.

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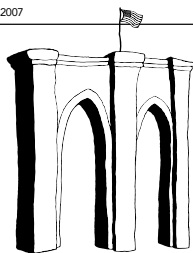
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THE STOOP

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS—DOWNTOWN DUMBO

Through Google looking glass

Last week, Google added a new feature to its mapping service: Street View. Now, not only can you search for an address and see it on a map, but also see the place you've searched for and its surroundings up close and personal. Almost too personal, in an Orwellian type of way. If Big Brother had Street View in "1984," he would never have had to leave the house.

Immediately after launch, the on-line zeitgeist was bursting with two cries: 1) "This is great thing!" 2) "This is a great ... invasion of privacy!"

An Oakland resident told the New York Times she was freaked out to see her cat captured in one of the still photos. She worried that the next step is could be pictures of her bookshelf.

Google's Lars Rasmussen says that Street View is not an invasion of privacy since all photos used for the project were taken in public places. Despite some folks' complaints, an entire subculture around Street View popped up literally overnight. One site, map.mole.com, is dedicated to some of the silly, saucy and scary images captured by the project's photo vans. That got us thinking: are there sunbathers, giant pumpkins, crimes in progress or something that looks like E.T. in the photos snapped of Brooklyn Heights?

The first thing you notice when trolling the virtual streets is that people sure love to double park in our neighborhood. On the days the photos were taken, countless delivery trucks, vans and civilian vehicles congested the area. A Street View jaunt down Remsen Street turns up two goats in what appear to be matching khaki jackets who may or may not be the street's famous "Goggle Brothers."

While it may take days, weeks or months for us to really find something juicy in this vision of Brooklyn Heights preserved in time like a bug in amber, many natives who have since moved out of the area are using Street View as a way to take a virtual trip down memory lane.

"I went home again yesterday," Philadelphia Daily News columnist Bill Conlon wrote recently.

"Who says you can't go there? I started at the corner of Hicks Street and Grace Court — my home stickball field street in Brooklyn Heights more than 60 years ago. On my left, were brownstones dating to the mid-19th century, now renovated into seven-figure townhouses."

And while the Grace Court of Conlon's youth will soon be made over into condos, it will forever be preserved in cyberspace via Street View. Maybe that's worth giving up your cat's right to privacy for, after all.

Homer Fink is publisher of Brooklyn Heights Blog

THE KITCHEN SINK

Sighting: One day after **Galapagos Art Space** announced it would move to DUMBO, we caught the director of the art factory, **Robert Elmes**, walking out of the **DUMBO General Store** with the Brooklyn Paper under his arm. Smart man ...

Our pal **Mildred Oken**, who lives in **Concord Village**, was recently honored by the **Red Cross** for her many years of volunteer work in Brooklyn. She is the widow of **George Oken**, who was general counsel of the Long Island Rail Road.

Elizabeth Lindenmeyer, who lives at 60 Remsen St., was also honored ... Kids from **P5 307** — which was recently adopted by the **Downtown Brooklyn Partnership**, the **DUMBO Improvement District** and **Councilwoman Letitia James** — got free tickets to Sunday's Mets game as a reward for each reading 10 books during their recent book-a-thon. Alas, the Mets lost, but as any book reader knows, this season is going to have a happy ending.

E-mail us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

HEIGHTS LOWDOWN

Homer Fink

Number 16's 'Court'-ing bids

By Melissa Saks

for The Brooklyn Paper

The owners of one of Brooklyn's tallest buildings — the 38-story office tower at 16 Court St. — are accepting offers to sell the historic icon, The Brooklyn Paper has learned.

A source told the Paper that the building is being shopped around for \$130 million — though the source believes the building is worth between \$60 and \$80 million.

There is considerable interest in the property, one of many Downtown buildings riding a wave of luxury development and renovations throughout the area.

When the Downtown Brooklyn rezoning was approved in 2004, many planners believed that the new right to build taller structures would result in more office space construction. But in the past 18 months, the trend — at Albee Square, Wiloughby Street and elsewhere — has been towards increased residential development.

In addition, old office buildings are being turned into luxury condos, such as the Bellini Loft on Bridge Street, a historic telephone building where units range from \$470,000 to over \$3 million, said Hal Henenson, executive director of development



The tower at 16 Court St., at the corner of Montague Street, is for sale.

marketing at Prudential Douglas Elliman.

"People who are savvy know what's going on in Downtown Brooklyn," Henenson said.

Savvy, but not necessarily talking: management and the owners of 16 Court St. declined to comment for this story.

The 1920s-era building is filled with offices — though at least one local official dreams of it following the residential trend.

"I've always had a fantasy of turning the tower into residential property and leaving the rest commercial," said Rob Pernis, district manager of Community Board 2, which includes Brooklyn Heights and Downtown. "You could have a residential entrance on Montague Street."

Either way, some tenants look forward to new ownership.

"We hear all kinds of things and we hope for the best because the place is turning into a dump," said Richard Goldberg, who has a law office in the building. "We need some new hands to get in here and put millions of dollars into much-needed refurbishments. The management now barely gets this place painted. We've been here 30 years, and I'd say it was about 20 too long."

Downtown strip goes green

By Melissa Saks

for The Brooklyn Paper

The median along Boerum Place won't be the ugly step-sister to Adams Street's beautifully leafy traffic divider for much longer, thanks to a \$3.6-million makeover of Boerum Place from Fulton Street to Atlantic Avenue.

Those who work in busy Downtown are looking forward to seeing green.

"I prefer the greening of New York anytime," said Mini Rosenberg, who works across the street from the unsightly Boerum Place center divider.

"This is a very ugly strip and it would be a welcome relief from the heat, the dust, and the fumes if there was some greenery."

A walk down Adams Street can be a picturesque break from the daily grind of Downtown Brooklynites, but below Fulton Street, the wide traffic divider narrows to a tiny strip. The shady trees and green shrubs that separate the lanes of traffic on Adams



The cement median on Boerum Place (left) will soon match its counterpart on Adams Street (right).

Street are nothing but cracked, uneven pavement below Fulton.

But change is coming, though there won't be shovels in the ground for about a week, according to the city Economic Development Corporation, which is overseeing the work.

The one-year project will also include new fire hydrants, new drainage systems, and some minor utility work.

Three lanes of traffic are to be maintained in each direction during construction, and community officials have been reassured that keeping traffic moving is a priority.

"They will try to maintain as normal a traffic flow as possible," said Community Board 2 District Manager Rob Pernis.

There will be restricted parking while work is being done and temporary bus stop relocation.

More than two-thirds of the \$3,644,000 cost of the project was allocated by Mayor Bloomberg,

and nearly \$1 million came from Borough President Markowitz's capital budget. Markowitz said he is proud to support the development of Downtown and "enhance the pedestrian experience."

Sone of his constituents agreed heartily.

"Beautification always helps," said Clinton Hill resident Charles Simmons. "Alleviating the site of concrete and potholes would greatly enhance the neighborhood."

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THE stoop

CARROLL GARDENS—COBBLE HILL BOERUM HILL
RED HOOK

This band could get arrested

Finally, the precocious rockers who frequent Red Hook's Liberty Heights Tap Room have gotten into trouble, comforting those of us who worry that today's kids may believe that handoffs were invented as fashion accessories.

A 16-year-old, faux-hawked drummer and wannabe graffiti artist from Woodstock, became the first alleged law-breaker of the tap room's burgeoning kid-core movement — the pun-sized, punk-influenced and parentally endorsed live music scene.

The spray paint on the would-be Joey Ramone's tag wasn't even dry when a squad of officers from the 76th Precinct pulled up and took away a boy in a CBGB T-shirt who had come to town in his dad's car. The police ended up dropping the graffiti charge.

But for his young bandmates, the arrest had more dire consequences: a drum-free gig. The Defenestrators, a fast-paced, pop-punk quartet that describes itself on its Myspace page as sounding "like people who throw things out of windows," had never played without their buskkeeper before.

Sipping sodas in the front of the bar, the band's three remaining free members lamented their loss.

"I've always had a soft spot for teen-bopper rule-breakers. In fact, I only stopped by the rock n' roll to observe the graffiti arrest after learning that the involved party was a Little League-aged, trendy-headed drummer born after indie rock became the soundtrack of Saturn commercials."

But at the same time, there is an annoying factor here. Griny, industrial Red Hook is a TV-appropriate setting for a pampered kid's all-rock reenactments. Punk shows should not involve unloading gear from your parent's SUVs at a bar that serves only on Saturday afternoons.

In today's Brooklyn of parentally endorsed punk shows and mall-bought handoffs, I fear mini-rockers, in their designer bad-boy haircuts and yellow skull-and-crossbones T-shirts, have forgotten that rock music was once supposed to be about breaking rules.

So, I had to give the graffiti kid some credit. I mean, at least he's learning that playing the part of a punk comes with more dire consequences than a hefty iTunes bill.

Plus, isn't it about time for a Ramones-inspired remake of "Jailhouse Rock?"

THE KITCHEN SINK

Charles Goldman, former president of the board **Hanna Senesh Community Day School**, died on May 24. Goldman was instrumental in helping the school fund the construction of its new building at 342 Carroll St. in Carroll Gardens. He will be missed. ... **360** Van Brunt Street's French eatery, will be closed all summer in a nod to the European tradition of taking a rural vacation. Some say the acclaimed dinner spot may reopen in the fall under new management. ... Several blocks of Red Hook's main drag was transformed last Thursday night into a set for Charlie Kaufman's latest flick, "Synecdoche," starring **Michelle Williams** and Philip Seymour Hoffman. At one point, a production assistant had to shush local rowdies hanging outside the **Ball and Tackle** bar, reminding them that movie-making, like movie-watching, required quiet. Word is that Williams and Hoffman stayed up late with **hooked** coffee as a fuel.

E-mail us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

BROOKLYN SOUTH



Ariella Cohen



The Ferrara Brothers cement factory, at a bend in the Gowanus Canal, as seen from the F train. Joseph Ferrara wants the city to pay him back for seizing the land under the factory.

Cement magnate: city crushed me

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

Cleaning up a patch of toxic land near the Gowanus Canal and turning it into residential condos and open space is all well and good — but what's going to happen to the cement man?

That's what Joseph Ferrara — a.k.a. the cement man — wanted to know the other day when he interrupted a Community Board 6 meeting on the fate of the canal-front, city-owned development site known as Public Place to demand for payback for a piece of the site that once belonged to him.

"I want someone to tell me why [the city] condemned my land 35 years ago and just now needs to use it to build residential," he said to a rapt audience filled with community members and City Planning officials.

Ferrara's company, Ferrara Brothers Building Materials, has manufactured concrete on Hoyt Street between Fifth Street and the Canal since the early 1970s. But in 1975, his property was condemned as part of a larger plan to create parkland on the contaminated former manufacturing gas plant. Since then, he's had to rent his own land back from the city on a month-to-month basis.

But now, as the city moves forward with a plan to build residential towers and parkland on the 5.8-acre Public Place site, the 55-year-old company could be evicted within the year, with not a cent of reimbursement.

"The city said that it would help us find a new location, but [it] has made no offers to reimburse us," said the concrete maker, estimating

that relocating his massive waterfront mixers and barges could cost "in the millions — if a [suitable] location can be found."

A spokeswoman for the Southwest Brooklyn Development Corporation said that the city is working with Ferrara to find a new home for his business, which also has two facilities in Queens. Location is no small matter when it comes to fresh concrete, which must get to construction sites within 90 minutes of production — not an easy feat in the traffic-choked "new Brooklyn."

Over the past few years, Ferrara's Hoyt Street facility has chugged out concrete for the foundation of the World Trade Center Memorial, the city's massive Third Water Tunnel project, and even architect Richard Meier's glassy On Prospect Park tower, according to Ferrara. "We picked the Gowanus [area] because of its proximity to Lower Manhattan," he said. "Show me another place to make concrete that close to the city."

The redevelopment of the Public Place site is one part of the city's larger plan to bring new homes, shops and parks to the oil-soaked industrial corridor that separates posh Park Slope from brownstone Boerum Hill and Carroll Gardens.

Ferrara Brothers is the only business that will be directly displaced by the Public Place project. Janet Patterson, a spokeswoman for the city's Economic Development Corporation, said the city planned to develop an "appropriate relocation assistance plan" to aid the company.

"The city recognizes the importance of Ferrara Brothers and its contribution to the construction industry of New York City," she said.

A little green pocket

The Brooklyn Paper

The city's Green Thumb parks program has paired with a team of local landscape designers to create a lush, wildflower-dotted meadow on a long-vacant corner of President and Van Brunt streets, next to Mother Cabrini Park in the Columbia Street Waterfront District.

The storefront-sized meadow — now an unmanicured thicket of knee-high grasses and rangy wildflowers — should be open for neighborhood grazing by the end of the summer.

"There is really no place in the area for lying in the grass and looking at the flowers. It's something we all need," said landscape designer and neighborhood resident Julie Farris, who designed the new city park with designers at Balmori Associates and the Parks Department.



A proposed green space.

"It's already the green counterpoint to all asphalt around here," said Green Thumb Director Edie Stone, who said that the park could be complete even before the end of August if Mother Nature cooperates.

The new greenery is expected to clean the air of approximately 33 pounds of pollutants annually, according to a study of the soot-sucking capabilities of the 18-acre site.

Scientists from Columbia University also found that the storefront-size meadow will absorb the run-off equivalent of 60,000 toilet flushes, or 240,000 gallons of rainwater.

Park signage will alert meadow-users of such eco-benefits of their romping grounds, according to plans for the site.

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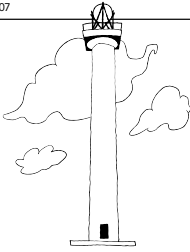
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THE Stoop

FORT GREENE-CLINTON HILL

Brewing up for a coffee war

Coffee bars are flooding the neighborhood as quickly as a cup of joe down a working grunt's throat.

Two entrepreneurs are racing to open coffee shops by mid-June, just in time for the local mechanic's no season. In so doing, they are joining a packed field of caffeine purveyors that includes DeKalb Avenue anchor, Tilly's, DeKalb newcomer Urban Spring, Myrtle Avenue's Pillow Cafe, and Smooch on Carlton Avenue. In total, there are already at least 10 places to buy brew — from bodega swill to fair-trade organic — within a four-block radius.

GREENE ACRES



Dana Rubinstein

But the neighborhood's craving for the god of wakefulness is so insatiable that a new cafe called Bittersweet will join the fray, opening on DeKalb Avenue, between Cumberland Street and Carlton Avenue, in the digs of a former real-estate office. Lucien Redwood is the proprietor, and his plans are fancy: there'll be Balzac pastries and homemade bittersweet-chocolate ice cream. Sounds scandalously delicious. But will the coffee shop be able to withstand the competition? Just summer down Carlton, hang a right on Wiloughby Street, and you'll run smack into another cafe also to open shop in mid-June. It's called Bidonville (pronounced bee-side-VEEL), a French term for shantytown. But the coffee shop will be more postmodern, than modern ghetto.

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to the area," said Redwood. "Especially in the food industry. Look at Smith Street, where there's restaurant after restaurant after restaurant. I don't fear it at all. I actually welcome it."

Then again, who travels to another neighborhood for coffee? Starbucks sets up shop on every other corner because people don't go out of their way for a cup of brew.

The more-established competition isn't exactly shivering in fear either. Smooch co-owner Kalata (she goes by only one name, like Madonna, or Rambo) said there are enough coffee lovers to go around — thanks, in part, to (evil music sound cue) gentrification.

"When I moved here almost nine years ago it was an entirely different neighborhood," she said. "Now, there's more people looking for not only new homes but also for new business opportunities. I think it just comes with the concept of gentrification."

Can I get you a \$2 cup of joe with that brownstone?

THE KITCHEN SINK

We hear Canarsie Councilman Charles Barron threatened to work against the re-election of own Councilwoman Tish James because she abstained from the vote to rename a portion of Gates Avenue after Sonny Carson (racial arsonist or community leader? You decide). Barron couldn't be reached.

Pratt Institute alum Nick Baris has been promoted to director of exhibitions at his own alma mater. Congrats!

E-mail us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

Statue of limitations

Bizman: Move Gen. Fowler back 'home'

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

What a difference a block makes.

A Myrtle Avenue shopkeeper wants the city to relocate the Gen. Fowler statue from its position at the center of a busy intersection to Fort Greene Park, just one block away, even though the statue has been sitting at its present spot for 31 years.

His reasons are nostalgic, historic, and, yes, anthropomorphic.

"If you were born in a certain area, wouldn't you like to stay in that area?" asked Roy Vansco, a Myrtle Avenue shopkeeper and member of the Community Board 2 Parks Committee. "He belongs in Fort Greene Park. That's where he was sort of born, and he should be standing there."

Vansco, a World War II veteran, has personal reasons, too.

"I remember, as a child, sliding down the hill [near the tennis courts] and hitting the General and breaking my front tooth," said Roy Vansco, now 82. (He later had the chipped tooth capped.)

"And all the schools in the neighborhood used to picnic up there and hear about the history of Gen. Fowler."

Indeed, while his name may have sunk into near-complete



obscurity, Fowler's history is tightly linked with that of the park.

During the Civil War, Edward Fowler commanded the 14th Regiment of the New York National Guard, which was stationed at what is now Fort Greene Park. Following the

Park. But sadly, the vicissitudes of the 20th century took their toll.

"It was constantly vandalized," recalled Ruth Goldstein, who has lived in the neighborhood since 1970. "Then, one night, some people tried to steal the statue, but their truck got mired in the mud. The next day, the Parks people found the statue, and they wouldn't put it back in the park."

The statue was kept in storage until 1976, when it was reinstalled at Fowler Square, at Lafayette Avenue and Fulton Street, as part of the revitalization of what was then a red-light district.

"We could see the triangle always had great potential to be like a European plaza," said Goldstein. Indeed, the statue's arrival to the square helped transform it into the public park it is today, and the Parks Department has no plans to change course.

"Right now there are no plans to [return the sculpture to the park], as we recently spruced up the landscaping and lighting at its current location in Fowler Square, near the Brooklyn Academy of Music," said Parks spokesman Phil Abramson. "Its former location in Fort Greene Park is now inhabited by the 400-million-year-old, 14-ton glacial erratic [rock] that was unearthed last year."

So Vansco's fight is quixotic at best. But a man can hope. "They never would have taken it out of Central Park or Prospect Park," said Vansco.

Pratt Institute goes green

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

Pratt Institute has become the first Brooklyn-based university to pledge to reduce its ozone-depleting, asthma-inducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent in the next 10 years.

The greening of the Clinton Hill institution was such a big deal that Mayor Bloomberg rushed to the college on Wednesday to hype Pratt's tacit approval of his PlaNYC environmental agenda.

Pratt — which actually has a job called "Sustainability Coordinator for Facilities and Operations" — will inspect its campus this fall to find out which buildings are emitting the most gases. The college also committed to using "green" practices in all of its

future construction projects.

This is only the latest in a neighborhood-wide effort to turn Fort Greene and Clinton Hill into environmentally friendly communities.

Rev. David Dyson, of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, has committed to transforming his 147-year-old house of worship into a green beacon, and the Fort Greene Association, under the leadership of attorney Jed Marcus (Fort Greene's own Mr. Green) is developing a plan to encourage environmentally friendly practices in the neighborhood.

He, for one, was thrilled by Pratt's announcement.

"I think it's fabulous," said Marcus. "It's great that people set goals and try to figure out how to do them. And it's good to set ambi-

tious goals — 30 percent is an ambitious goal."

For its part, Pratt sees going green as part of its mission.

"As a college of art, design, and architecture, Pratt has a responsibility to innovate and teach sustainable practices and to model the city's sustainable lifestyle through the buildings, interiors, and products our students, faculty, and alumni create," said Pratt Institute President Thomas Schutte.

Pratt is one of nine higher-learning institutions citywide to commit to the drastic greenhouse gas reductions. The other schools are Columbia University, Barnard College, Cooper Union, all 23 campuses of the City University of New York, Fordham University, New York University, St. John's University, and the New School University.

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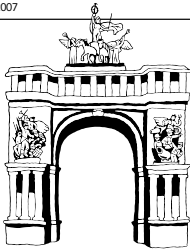
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THE STOOP

PARK SLOPE PROSPECT HEIGHTS, SUNSET PARK
WINDSOR TERRACE, KENSINGTON

Nica and Hitch go with 'God'

I didn't spend much time in Park Slope this past weekend, because on Saturday I was invited to discuss the "rise of atheism as a religious subcategory in publishing" at the Book Expo America (the book world's trade show).

This was pretty esteemed company: my panel included Victor Stenger, quantum physicist, professor and author of "God: The Failed Hypothesis"; and Christopher Hitchens, journalist, provocateur and most recently the author of "God Is Not Great: Why Religion Poisons Everything," which just happens to be number one on the Times bestseller list. The moderator was publishing heavyweight Sarah Crichton, whose book with Marianne Pearl, "A Mighty Heart," has also graced the bestseller list and was turned into a movie starring Angelina Jolie.

And then there was me: Nica Lalli, PTA mom, first-time author and memoirist. Compared to "Hitch" and "Stenger," I'm a lightweight, not a real literary type, not a heavy-duty intellectual, not a person with multiple degrees in sciences who has any of the Big Answers.

Stenger was friendly and sort of grandfatherly — but I could tell he considered my book a bit inconsequential, since I do not mention any science in it at all.

Hitchens was charming, his British accent and Old World ways made me forget momentarily that he had supported the Iraq War. I had met my fellow Brooklynite Crichton before, and felt she was a friend among these impressive dudes.

But lo and behold, I had an important voice to add to the discussion: the voice of humanity, community and neighborhood. Stenger offered reasons why a rational person should not believe, while Hitchens reported on all the harm that religion has caused the world, but I added a valuable voice: the voice of what it is like to be a non-believer in America today.

Hitchens provided the vitriol, Stenger gave the science behind disproving the existence of God, and I was the softer, gentler side of atheism. I was the personal anecdote and the funny story voice. Laughter is a great way to bring people together, and I got one of the biggest laughs of the evening. (For those of you who read Hitchens' piece in Vanity Fair about why women are not as funny as men, all I can say is touché!)

I was commenting on the atheist books out there today, and said that some of them weren't even very — pause and glance at Hitchens — nice. The savvy literati crowd burst into laughter — and Hitchens joined them. For a bunch of grumpy men raging against the machine, I brought them together.

I think there is a reason why a book like "God Is Not Great" is the bestselling book in America. Atheists have been a silent and reviled minority for a long time; we have not had a voice. It is as if we had our mouths taped. Now that the tape has been ripped off, we are screaming.

I don't want to be that yelling person — angry and venomous. I want to dialogue and add constructively to the conversation that must begin to happen in a new way in our country. I may not want to scream, but sitting next to the guy who does, and does it so well (and sells books like hotcakes), was a thrill.

E-mail us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com



Nica Lalli

Not such a Stoop-id idea

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Park Slopers will celebrate the longest day of the year by sitting on their stoops and blowing kazoos — part of the first annual "STOOPendous" party to celebrate Brownstone Brooklyn's trademark feature.

On June 23, the neighborhood-wide stoop party will (at least its organizers hope) culminate in an 8:31 pm, kazoo-blowing, all-Slope solstice shout-out. Technically, summer solstice falls on June 21. But Thursdays aren't all that convenient for fall-on-sun-worship, with most adults basking in the fluorescent lights of sun-starved office buildings, and children growing pale in school.

So Saturday it is. And what a stupendous, STOOPendous it will be.

The idea stems from a brainstorming session held earlier this year by the Park Slope Civic Council.

"This was overwhelmingly the most popular idea at the brunch," said Council President Lydia Denworth, whose recollections were interrupted by sneezing (spring equinox allergies).

"It's important and exciting to celebrate the community we have, and this is such a Park Slope way of doing it," said Denworth. "These are the kinds of things that help build the spirit of the community, which helps when you have to do other stuff, like the hard work of advocacy."

Even though the Civic Council is underwriting the event with \$1,250 worth of advertising and kazoos, Denworth herself won't be sitting on her stoop on STOOPendous day.

"Unfortunately, I have a long-term commitment to go visit my mother," said Denworth. "I'm really sad. But I will be blowing my kazoo from Maryland."

Not so Susan Fox, a trustee on the Council and the founder of Park Slope Parents, who will be hosting a meet-and-greet in her building's courtyard.

"Our building doesn't really have a stoop," said Fox. "But STOOPendous is going to be everything you can think of. Some blocks will have a street-wide stoop sale. ... Some people are having wine and cheese on their doormat. Some people are bringing out the chalk. We are planning a children's art show."

Lest anyone think this is another example of Brooklynites romanticizing the past, the stoop has always been a prized possession and symbol of Brownstone Brooklyn, according to Simeon Bankoff, executive director of the Historic Districts Council.

"The wonderful thing about stoops is that they became this semi-public space where you could sit," said Bankoff of the stairways fronting the late-19th-century rowhouses. "In Park Slope, you didn't really have yards. It was like a porch."

Whether this inaugural 21st-century STOOPendous is a success, however, remains to be seen. "If you build it, they don't necessarily come," said Fox. "At this point, the next three weeks will be all about getting people excited and interested."



A youngster gets in the spirit of STOOPendous, the Park Slope Civic Council's tribute to the front stoop on June 23.

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Lest anyone think this is another example of Brooklynites romanticizing the past, the stoop has always been a prized possession and symbol of Brownstone Brooklyn, according to Simeon Bankoff, executive director of the Historic Districts Council.

"The wonderful thing about stoops is that they became this semi-public space where you could sit," said Bankoff of the stairways fronting the late-19th-century rowhouses. "In Park Slope, you didn't really have yards. It was like a porch."

Whether this inaugural 21st-century STOOPendous is a success, however, remains to be seen. "If you build it, they don't necessarily come," said Fox. "At this point, the next three weeks will be all about getting people excited and interested."

Washout! Heights apts flooded

By Harry Cheadle
The Brooklyn Paper

Residents of a Prospect Heights tenement are dripping mad after this week's severe storm flooded their apartments — including one rented by a couple celebrating its first wedding anniversary.

The honeymoon isn't over yet for groom Jon Dennis — but he had a bad domestic situation to deal with on June 3. Around 10:30 pm during one of the worst downpours in weeks, an ominous sound came from his front room.

"All of a sudden, we heard water," said Dennis. "It sounded like it was raining in our house."

Upon inspection, Dennis found rainwater pouring through new holes in the ceiling holes, some several feet wide.

Dennis and his wife spent their anniversary in combat — not with each other, of course, but with the flooding, rotating three buckets to catch the water.

The leaks — which flooded apartments as far down as the second floor — were likely caused by contractors working on the roof, tenants said.

Landlord Michael Rothstein said the contractors were removing asbestos, and that he had work permits for all of the current projects on the building.

The tenants are unsure of what to do next — move out or sue. Dennis said, still bleary-eyed from his all-night battle against the elements. Some anniversary.



Jon Dennis looks at the hole in the roof of his apartment at 349 St. Johns Pl. in Prospect Heights.

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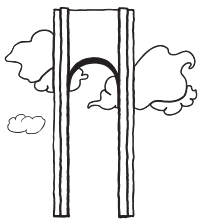
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THE stoop

BAY RIDGE-BENSONHURST DYKER HEIGHTS BATH BEACH

Eulogy for the Green Church

The Green Church will not be saved — you can take that to the bank and cash it. Yet despite the writing on the check, some members of the community continue to fight the inevitable.

Call it denial (or call it optimism), but many residents are having a hard time coming to terms with losing their beloved church, which according to a spokeswoman for the Massey Knakal realty giant, is as good as sold.

"The property is under hard contract," said Ken Neering.

So Bay Ridge United Methodist, the 107-year-old structure on Fourth and Ovington avenues, will be torn down and it will become condos — but don't blame a lack of effort from local preservationists. They have worked hard, and against long odds, to maintain the integrity of our neighborhood, prompting the consensus cliché — the Hail Mary.

The first "Hail Mary" attempt was by Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge), who worked out a deal that would have saved the church, added condo units to the neighborhood, and yielded a \$300,000 annual windfall for the church for upkeep.

Most viewed Gentile's pass as a perfect spin, except for the congregants of the church, who wanted no savior (at least in terms of saving the structure).

The second Hail Mary attempt (remember you get four downs) was thrown by the Committee to Save the Bay Ridge United Methodist Church. They urged people to call the Landmarks Preservation Commission, which has the power to declare a building a landmark even without the owner's permission. But that pass never even made it back to the line of scrimmage: Landmarks promptly declined the request to protect the 100-year-old church.

Then, historian Wade Gorla raised the roof at last month's Community Board 10 meeting in yet another attempt to save the church. Gorla, whose microphone was pulled out of his hand at the previous meeting by CB10 Chairman Dean Ransany after he bashed the Methodist hierarchy, began an impassioned sermon of his own, ranting and screaming (at times, quite eloquently) at the standing-room-only audience.

"We can't let them take this from us," Gorla shouted. "This is our community, this is our church, and this is our fight, now is the time to make our voices heard."

Yellow Hooker is thinking a new cliché might be more appropriate. This one involves an obese woman and the final few notes of a song. Well, they gave it a shot (or two, or three).

THE KITCHEN SINK
Everything Zen? Not at least as far as the garbage and debris at Shore Road Park is concerned. The trash is located between two of the park's most cherished attractions: the **Zen Garden** and the **Butterfly Park**. Before we can cleanse the space of perception, perhaps officials should first cleanse the large cement stones and the old fencing. ... War, what is it good for? How about the best shovels with garlic sauce? **Bay Ridge Neighbors for Peace** is now meeting on Mondays at **Mazza Plaza**, which is at 8002 Fifth Ave., at 8 p.m. ... A source tells The Stoop that state **Sen. Harry Golden** (R-Bay Ridge) is close to running for Mayor. "Let me put it this way, at this point we feel quite encouraged," said the source. E-mail.us@Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

online at BrooklynPaper.com

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PINEAPPLE WALK
BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

By Lilo H. Stainton
The Brooklyn Paper

84th Precinct

Call it the fruit brute brouhaha.

Two fiber-conscious twenty-somethings were arrested on May 31 and accused of brutally beating two men who intervened when they stole a pair of fruit cups from a Lawrence Street grocery, police said.

The pair wandered into the store, near the corner of Willoughby Street, just before 2 p.m. When they tried to pocket the pre-cut fruit — priced at \$3 each — a 43-year-old man

saw and alerted the owner.

The merchant stepped up and asked the men to replace the fruit. But the health nuts declined and pounced, with one man putting the owner in a chokehold and the other punching him in the gut.

When the witness ran to help, the brutes turned their anger on him and punched him in the face. Luckily, Police Officer Marc Grabowski came upon the scene and arrested the two thugs, ages 24 and 25, on robbery charges.

Armed attack

A trio of gun-toting robbers stormed the workers at a Flatbush Avenue electronics store at closing time on May 27 and escaped with personal items and merchandise, police said.

The three thugs rushed the chain store, at the corner of Fourth Avenue, just after 5 p.m., when the two workers were closing up shop. One robber, with a black handgun drawn, forced the 20-year-old woman working there to open the back door, which led to the office. He forced her co-worker, a 21-year-old man, to turn off the security camera.

The robbers then ordered the two into the office and, with guns pointed at their backs, ordered them to lie on the floor. The accomplices swiped the victims' keys, books and cellphones, then picked what they wanted from the store's merchandise. A detailed list of the stolen items was not available.

Bad neighbor

There's being a friendly neighbor, then there is being a thief. Rarely do both conditions exist in the same person. But on June 2, a 59-year-old man who lives in a Duffield Street building was robbed by one of his fellow residents, police said.

The man arrived at his home, near the corner of Willoughby Street, shortly after 9 p.m. His neighbor entered at the same time and followed him into his apartment. The returning man thought nothing of the visitor, since they were friendly from meeting in the building.

So the soon-to-be victim didn't react when the visitor started riffling through his pockets — even though he was still wearing the pants. Actually, the resident thought it was a joke. The interloper didn't use any violence or threats, but he did help himself to \$105 and two house keys.

Police have the name and other details about the 56-year-old suspect and are now investigating.

Subway heist

Could a "heist" have saved her? A woman was robbed of nearly \$3,000 in jewelry and electronics by a knife-wielding thug who

POLICE BLOTTER

claimed he only wanted to talk to her, police said.

The 27-year-old victim was attacked as she waited for a Manhattan-bound 2 train at the Hoyt Street station, near Fulton Street, around 9:30 p.m. on June 1. A man in his 20s came over and asked, "Can I talk to you?"

When she refused, the stranger pulled a knife and changed his tune, just grabbing her bag and jewelry and bolted.

Barista target

Someone swiped the purse of a woman working at a coffee franchise on Smith Street on June 1, police said.

The 24-year-old left her \$300 LeSportsac bag on the counter while she was helping customers shortly after 2 p.m. at the national chain, at the corner of Wyckoff Street. But when she reached for the bag just five minutes later, it was gone. Security video will most likely help police track down who removed the item.

Quick grabs

Note to drivers: Crime may be down, but that's no reason to give thieves easy pickings.

That lesson became clear last week to two separate victims when both left valuables in unlocked cars and — shockingly — the items were stolen, according to police.

On May 27, a 40-year-old man parked his car near the MetroTech complex on Willoughby Street, at the corner of Duffield Street, at around 11 p.m. Even though he said he left \$1,200 in cash inside the car, along with his cellphone, the victim neglected to lock the car — or even close the passenger-side window.

When he returned to the vehicle an hour later, both the cash and the phone were gone.

Two days later, a victim left his vehicle at the corner of Montague and Hicks streets for fewer than five minutes, but his wallet still disappeared.

The 70-year-old parked at 5:20 p.m. and went to the corner to purchase a newspaper. He also left the car unlocked, the window open — and his wallet in plain view on the front seat. When he returned, the wallet was gone.

88th Precinct

Greene gunman

Two women were attacked at gunpoint in separate subway station incidents just days — and blocks — apart, police said.

One victim managed to bargain her assailant down, and the

other held onto her belongings, but suffered a terrible beating.

On May 27, a thug with a silver semi-automatic gun robbed a woman leaving the Clinton-Washington G-train station at 11 p.m. She stepped off a Queens-bound train and was headed up the stairs, out of the station, at the corner of Lafayette and Washington avenues when she was attacked.

The man in front of her suddenly wheeled around and pointed the shiny 9mm gun in her face. "Give me your purse," the man said. But the woman stalled, asking, "Can I just give you my wallet?"

When he agreed, she actually pulled out cash from her billfold and handed over the greenbacks — a total of \$165.

"Now walk down the stairs," the thief instructed. She complied, turning and heading back down into the station.

Just two days later, and several blocks south, a 26-year-old woman was beaten bloody when she refused to give up her purse to a gun-toting thief.

The victim was headed to the C train at the corner of Fulton Street and Lafayette Avenue, around 10 p.m., when she was attacked. The man in front of her on the stairs suddenly turned around and pointed a large silver gun, wrapped in a towel, in her direction.

"Miss, give me your bag," he insisted. "Give me your bag or I'll kill you."

But the victim didn't want to play. "No — are you crazy?" she responded. The thief then smashed her on the left side of her head and forced her to the ground, and

repeated his threat: "I'll kill you. Give me your bag."

But the feisty woman again declined and screamed when the robber rushed her again. He tried to pull the bag from her grasp, but she kept yelling and holding on tight. Eventually, he gave up and bolted from the station — empty handed.

The victim suffered a gash above her eye and was treated by EMS at the station.

Tuned-out thief

A robber used a radio antenna to threaten a man on Myrtle Avenue early on May 30, police said.

The 42-year-old was making his way home, to a block near Washington Park, after a party in the neighborhood. But during his walk, around 1:45 a.m., he noticed he was being followed.

When he turned around, he realized the stranger pursuing him had an automobile antenna as a weapon. "Be nice to a brother. Share what you've got," the guy insisted. He then demanded the victim's wallet.

But when the victim reached for his cellphone instead to dial 911, the robber became angry. The antenna man snatched the phone and fled.

Hammer time

Words led to violence in a Myrtle Avenue brawl on June 1. But they also led to jail, for two teenagers.

Police arrested two thugs, ages 18 and 19, after they allegedly beat an older guy with a hammer and a metal pipe near the corner of Waverly Avenue, around 9:15 a.m.

What began as an altercation between the teens and a 35-year-old man escalated with the younger men picked up the weapons and at-

tacked. The older man tried to defend himself, but suffered injuries to his arms and face.

It's not clear what started the brawl, but it ended when Officer Evita Poole, with the 88th Precinct, placed the two teens under arrest on assault charges. Poole also took the hammer, pipe and a videotape of the incident into evidence.

76th Precinct

Seek robber

Call it the high-noon heist on Court Street.

The bank job began when the thief entered the branch, near First Place, shortly before noon on May 17, police said. Posing as a customer, he wandered up to a teller and asked to cash a check.

When she asked if he had an account, he answered truthfully. But he did have a gun, which promptly compelled the teller to fill a bag with \$100s, \$50s and \$20s — \$1,800 in all, cops said.

The teller followed the thief's demand to not trip the alarm, but at least \$200 of the cash was marked, allowing police to track the robber's spending. The man — described as a white Hispanic man in a red shirt, black hat and blue jeans — bolted from the store with the cash, but investigators are following his movements.

Gameboy heist

Police arrested a teenage girl who they said was part of a gang of youngsters who stole a Gameboy and roughed up two younger boys on May 22.

The two victims, ages 10 and 14, were walking near the corner of Second and Henry streets around 3:30 p.m. when the gang of older teens rushed them. Someone shoved off the handle of a knife and another attacker snatched the portable game console.

But when police arrived, they could only catch up with one 16-year-old suspect. Officer Alexander Bakalis arrested the girl on robbery charges.

Masked attack

A trio of masked men wielding a hammer jumped and brutally beat man coming home early on May 24, police said.

The three thugs pulled out the tool around 2:30 p.m., as the 20-year-old victim neared the corner of Henry and Lorraine streets. One thug hit the victim in the head several times and snatched the man's keys.

The victim said he has seen one of the men — a white Hispanic man, dressed in a red hat, red shirt and bandana — around the neighborhood. The other two covered their faces entirely.

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THE SHAYA REPORT

Slopers react to Boymelgreen's buildings

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Like so many Park Slopers shedding their winter skins, the black shrouds are coming down on Fourth Avenue's newest high-rises, giving locals a tantalizing first glimpse of real-estate mogul Shaya Boymelgreen's vision for a thoroughfare he has dubbed the Park Avenue of Brooklyn.

The two most-recently unveiled luxury high-rises — tall amid the flat-fix shops, gas stations, and four-story rowhouses — are the Crest and NOVO, both drawing reactions ranging from condemnation to plaudits, and averaging something in between. "It's not particularly attractive, but it's not as ugly as others," said Slopers Dan Morgenroth of the Crest, the 12-story tower at Second Street whose sales office opened in May.

Besides, added Morgenroth, what matters most is on the inside, particularly when on a fairly unattractive avenue that he actually called "a bleeding eye-core."

"I don't think the attractiveness is the most important factor. It's a question of what people in the buildings bring to the neighborhood."

The Crest, built by Boymelgreen and the Katan Group, another Fourth Avenue heavyweight, has 68 one- and two-bedroom condos and a lobby designed by Andres Escobar. Prices range from \$355,000 to

\$751,000. From the outside, the yellow-brick building tops off in a tuft of curved balconies.

"I've seen worse," said Doug Ruhn, another Slopers.

The only onlooker who could bring herself to express a strong opinion lives next door to the Crest. She's not impressed.

"The windows look like they belong on a school," complained the woman, who, apparently fearful of retribution, would only identify herself as "G.P." "I don't like it at all."

Then again, Alex Geronzi, who sells fruit across the street from the Crest, called it a "good building. Everything new is good."

Park Slopers also could not reach unanimity on the NOVO, Boymelgreen's other new tower three blocks away.

The NOVO is constructed of a similar yellow brick, with a setback on top and, at least according to renderings, greenery streaming down the front. Its 113 units went on the market in February — and are believed to be the first luxury units for sale since the 2004 upturning.

Nestor Sature, who works across the street from NOVO, said, "This isn't something you want in front of your house." Sature lives in Canarsie.

Slopers have had a fraught relationship with Boymelgreen's aesthetic ever since he first saw the potential for development on the west side of Park Slope.

"You know, when I came to Park Slope [about eight years ago], Fifth Avenue was the border," recollected Boymelgreen during a March interview with The Brooklyn Paper. "And we started buying property between

Fifth and Fourth avenues. We didn't think about Fourth Avenue then. A few years later, the city said they wanted to downzone Park Slope and upzone Fourth Avenue. And so I thought, 'Fourth Avenue can be like

Park Avenue.'"

Boymelgreen's first major foray in the direction of the Slope was his conversion of a former Daily News plant into a luxury loft building dubbed NewsWalk. The well-received Prospect Heights conversion, on Pacific Street, between Carlton and S. Portland avenues, was completed in 2002.

Next in the pipeline was City View Gardens, completed in 2004 at 308 Second St., between Fourth and Fifth avenues. The following year Park Slope Gardens took shape on the same block.

Boymelgreen's interest in Fourth

Avenue kept stride with the city's decision to upzone the thoroughfare in 2004 — and to downzone the rest of Park Slope. The idea was to turn Fourth Avenue into a release valve for the intense development pressures on the rest of the neighborhood, giving builders a place where they could construct tall, dense buildings and opening the door for the transformation of the avenue from low-scale industrial to luxury residential.

Along the way, Boymelgreen and his frequent partner, the Katan Group, have changed the face of Fourth Avenue. But some area residents have grumbled about what they

described as "ugly" and "out of context" buildings. Some use the epithet "euphemism 'tuffly'" to describe Boymelgreen's work.

The developer understands such reactions. In fact, he told The Brooklyn Paper that his designs don't always turn out as well as they look on paper.

"Sometimes, I see something in my head that I think will be beautiful. But at the end of the day, it doesn't come out like I want, because of the zoning, because of the architect, because of the finishing," said Boymelgreen at the time. "You're not 100 percent in control."

Shaya's Report Card



The Crest (Fourth Avenue at Second Street)



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"It's anything but hip," said Menking. "It's fuddy-duddy," Shaker added. "Maybe I wouldn't vote for it in a competition, but at least I would say, 'Thank you for trying.'"

"At least this has usable terraces, but in terms of style, it's ... just so bad," said Menking. Shaker disagreed. "This is a quality job [with] good details."

"They're trying to be arty, but it's really lame, it's really terrible. They took a nice industrial building and just screwed it up," Shaker said. "Again, this is a box."

"It's always amazed me what passes for luxury in New York," said Menking. "It certainly doesn't give anything back to the city." Shaker agreed. "Again, this is a box."

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POLICE BLOTTER

Cops: Apparel theft was an inside job

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

A popular women's clothing store on Flatbush Avenue was robbed after a knife-wielding thief knocked on the back door and stormed inside on June 3 — but cops say that one of the employees was in on the job.

The terrifying attack began at 8:30 pm, when employees heard the knock on the back door of the apparel store, which is between Sterling and Park places. A 19-year-old worker opened the door, and the thief put his knife against her throat, screaming, "Open the safe, give me the money out of the safe or I'm going to kill this b—t!"

While the woman was being held at knifepoint, other employees handed over two bags of cash — totaling \$3,300 — from the safe, cops said.

But after the perp fled, cops questioned the woman who had been held, and determined that she was involved in the plot.

Police said that when they arrested her hours later, they found her with some of the stolen loot. She was arraigned on charges of grand larceny and criminal possession of stolen property.

A regional manager for American Apparel, who did not wish to have his name published, confirmed that the arrested woman had worked for the store.

He declined to comment further, citing the ongoing investigation. The arrested woman did not return calls for comment.

Clean pick

A group of teens swiped a woman's wallet right out of her bag as she walked near the corner of Flatbush and Seventh avenues on May 27.

The 63-year-old victim told cops that she never noticed the theft, but once she arrived at her Carlton Avenue home at around 3:30 pm, she noticed the missing wallet and remembered being "jostled" by a group of teenagers, she said.

She could not identify them clearly, but was very certain about what she lost: \$56, family pictures, credit cards, and the leopard-printer wallet itself.

Flower outage

A woman who had stopped to smell the roses at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden on Memorial Day returned to her parked car to

discover that it had been broken into and more than \$1,000 in jewelry and electronic equipment had been swiped.

The New Jersey woman told cops that she had parked her car on the Flatbush Avenue side of the Garden at around 4 pm and returned to it three hours later only to find that a hole had been drilled into the passenger-side door.

Gone were a digital camera, an MP3 player, a pair of diamond earrings and a nameplate necklace.

Lock the door!

A thief swiped a laptop computer from a 13th Street apartment after taking advantage of an unlocked front door on May 29.

A woman's son was in the apartment at the time, around 12:30 pm, but was in the bathroom when he heard the front door open, cops said.

He assumed that the noise was just his mother returning to the apartment, which is between Sixth and Seventh avenues. But when he finished his business, he realized the danger of assuming anything. The Dell computer had been stolen.

Slash & branch

A teenage girl slashed another teenager and her 20-year-old boyfriend with a bottle and a tree branch in an early morning attack on Third Street on June 2.

Police reports are sketchy, but it appears that the 19-year-old went after the 18-year-old with a bottle and the boyfriend with a tree branch just after midnight in front of a building between Fifth and Sixth avenues.

A police search yielded no sign of the assailant, who left the teenager with "minor scratches" on her back and the 20-year-old with swelling on his forehead.

Revenge beat

A man whose brother was fired from a construction job returned to his sibling's former job site and pounded two workers with a baseball bat on May 29, cops said.

The victim told police that the assailant was a stranger, but police later determined that the shagger was the brother of the worker who was fired from his job at the construction site on Fourth Avenue at 12th Street.

Cops know the axed worker's name and are investigating. The victims were left with sore shoulder and backs.

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This Robin Hood loves the smell of lavender

By Matthew Lysiak
and Michael Giardina

The Brooklyn Paper

68th Precinct

The sweet smell of lavender has inspired poetry, love songs, and now armed robbery.

That was the case when a man entered a sweet-smelling Third Avenue fragrance store at around 10 a.m. on May 29 and started talking about the fantastic scent.

The 31-year-old woman behind the counter told cops that the man then pulled up his shirt, flashed the handle of a gun, and helped himself to \$600 in the register.

Before leaving the store, which is near 87th Street, he had one more message for the clerk: "I am only doing this to feed my kids," he said.

Card caper

Don't blame Mom.

This time a basketball card collection — of the kind that is too often thrown out by sports-club members — was stolen from a man's apartment on May 30.

Cops say the victim left his building, which is near 75th Street, the night before only to return at 10 a.m. to discover his vintage basketball cards, valued at \$2,000, had been swiped. He also lost dozens of CDs.

Taxi terror

A 56-year-old woman picked up four passengers in her taxi, but ended up getting taken for a ride herself on June 2.

The trouble began at 9:25 p.m. when the victim picked up the four passengers at the intersection of 86th Street and Seventh Avenue.

Shortly after they got into the car, one of them asked to be dropped off a few blocks down the road. But as the taxi came to a stop on 84th Street near Tenth Avenue, the perps quickly grabbed the driver's cash and bolted out of the car.

Fortunately, the thugs only made off with \$5, and a free ride.

Purse swiped

A 32-year-old woman's expensive bag was stolen from an apartment lobby on Marine Avenue on June 2.

The heist went down as the victim was waiting in the lobby, near 100th Street, when a man came up from behind, grabbed her purse, and ran off.

The victim wasn't carrying any cash, but her purse was an expensive Louis Vuitton model, worth \$1,600.

Cycle swiped

A 24-year-old man parked his 2002 Honda motorcycle on 71st Street near 13th Avenue on May 30, only to return the next morn-

ing to discover the chain cut and his bike missing.

The chopper is valued at \$4,500, he told cops.

Dental extract

A landlord looking for rent from his dentist tenant took the doc's equipment and threatened to throw his equipment on the street on June 2.

The dispute turned heated when the landlord entered the office, which is near 99th Street, and removed some expensive equipment. He then called the dentist and threatened that if he didn't get his rent soon, the equipment would be thrown into the street.

Police told the landlord he had to give back the property.

62nd Precinct

Holy crimes

Two Bath Beach churches were broken into on consecutive days last week and robbed of cash and supplies.

The first break-in occurred on May 28 at St. Fithars, on Bath Avenue near Bay 19th Street. At around 11:30 a.m., the perps pried open the doors and took \$300, plus a DVD player and school supplies, police said.

The second swipe occurred the next day at St. Francis Cabrini, a church on 86th Street near Bay 11th Street. The perps broke in around 11 p.m., setting off the

security alarm and taking \$200, police said.

Unfortunately, neither church has security cameras — except, perhaps, for the eyes of a higher power.

Evening break

A 40-year-old man suffered minor injuries when two thugs kicked in the front door of his Van Siclen Street apartment, punched him and robbed him on June 4.

The break-in went down at around 6:30 p.m., when the thugs attacked the man and then rummaged through his pockets. When it was all over, the two criminals swiped \$200 in cash and fled the apartment.

Purse stolen

A purse belonging to a Crosey Avenue nursery home attendant was stolen right out of her locker on May 31.

The 45-year-old discovered the break-in at around 7 a.m., when she finished up her shift. She lost her handbag, plus credit and debit cards, police said.

There were no witnesses to the break-in at the facility, which is near Bay 32nd Street.

Light swipe

A man who parked his car on Lake Street returned to find it missing its headlights on May 30.

The 38-year-old discovered the lightless car, which was near Avenue T, at around 11:30 a.m. The 2003 Acura remained with its xenon headlights gone, police said.

Flat tire hijinx

A middle-aged woman got a flat and her purse stolen, all before her first cup of coffee on May 29. The woman stopped her car on 20th Avenue, near Bath Avenue, at around 10:30 a.m. Her car's flat attracted a thug, who proceeded

to swipe her purse, rather than help her. The purse contained \$100, including her credit and debit cards, police said.

Bail scam

An elderly woman fell for the ol' bail-out-your-son scam, handing over \$2,500 to a stranger who told her that her son had gotten in trouble on May 29, police said.

The scammer called the 81-year-old woman at her home on Shore Parkway near 20th Avenue at 3:30 p.m. and came by later to get the money.

Gym swipe

Though absent from these pages for several weeks, the gym swipe is back.

An 86th Street gym member had his wallet stolen after leaving it in a locker at around 5 p.m. on May 29. When the 24-year-old gym rat hit the showers an hour later, he found his wallet — and the \$100 and credit cards inside it — gone.

It's not the first time that this gym — which is near 19th Avenue — has made it to the Police Blotter. On April 23, the same workout palace was robbed — one of an astounding eight gym robberies throughout Bensonhurst since January.

Car jack

A man was held at gunpoint and then forced to watch as his car was stolen on May 29.

The victim had parked the car on Crosey Avenue, near Bay 41st Street at around 7 p.m. Just after the man locked the door, a thug with a black pistol came out from the shadows and swiped the keys from the victim, police said. With the gun still trained on his victim, the thug jumped into the 2000 Toyota and sped off down Shore Parkway.



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THE CYCLONES ARE BROOKLYN.

PIPELINE...

Continued from page 3

"The pipe is three-to-four feet underground," said Haase. "There are no portions of the pipeline that are exposed."

That was news to this reporter, who had no problem reaching the exposed portion of the pipeline and snapping a picture of himself touching it. All it took was crawling through a hole in the fence and navigating down a small hill.

A Department of Transportation truck actually drove by as this reporter snapped pictures of the pipeline, yet did not stop.

Haase said he has been receiving quite a few complaints lately, but most are due to misperceptions, like the idea that igniting a pipeline at JFK would spread through the pipes connected to parts of Queens and Brooklyn.

"That idea is patently absurd," said Haase. "There is no oxygen or air in the pipes, which you need for combustion."

State Sen. Mary Gideon (R-Bay Ridge) is calling for "full review of this portion" and the "implementation of necessary changes."

"The fear is very real," said Gideon. "We cannot be too cautious in the times in which we live."

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CB6 member to resign, ripping Marty

Porcelli asks others to join him, but so far no one has



The Brooklyn Paper: Gregory P. Murphy

By Ariella Cohen
The Brooklyn Paper

A veteran member of Community Board 6 will resign next week to protest the politically motivated using of nine board colleagues who voted against Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards mega-development — and he's urging his fellow panelists to do the same.

Cobble Hill lawyer Joseph Porcelli told The Brooklyn Paper that he would step down on June 11 after six years on the board as a response to Borough President Markowitz and Councilmember Bill DeBlasio's dismissal last month of board members who disagreed with them on the controversial project.

"We are supposed to be appointed to repre-

sent independent opinion. As soon as we did, people were whacked," Porcelli said, referring to the strong position CB6 took against Atlantic Yards, which Markowitz strongly supports.

Porcelli, an Atlantic Yards critic, kept his seat on the board despite voting for a critical CB6 resolution that said the borough president's pet project would cause "irreparable damage to the quality of life in the borough of Brooklyn."

He said the dismissals by Markowitz and DeBlasio (D-Park Slope) render "the whole community board process meaningless."

"These were people who were extremely knowledgeable and dedicated to presenting the community's issues fairly and democratically," he said.

The city's 50-member boards are made up of residents and business owners appointed by the

borough presidents as well as local councilmembers. Community Board 6 covers Park Slope, Boerum Hill, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill and Red Hook.

Markowitz said that he respected any decision made by his appointees.

"He is a longstanding member and I was pleased to reappoint him, which I did in good faith," he said, adding that there are "many qualified residents on a waiting list to serve."

Community Board 6 District Manager Craig Hammerman praised Porcelli as someone who "always had a very measured and intelligent response to issues."

No board members have yet taken Porcelli's lead, but one member admitted this week that he had considered taking the protest plunge.

"I thought about it," said longtime member Peter Fleming. "But then I thought that the best way to honor those who were not reappointed would be to stick around and do the work that they can no longer do."

In a subtle rebuke to Markowitz and DeBlasio, CB6 Chairman Richard Bashner agreed to allow several ousted members to retain their seats on board committees, albeit in a non-voting manner.

The members are former chairman Jerry Arner, Angela Beni, Pauline Blake, Bill Blum, Al Cabbad, Barbara Longobardi, Madalaine Murphy, Marilyn Oliva and Theresa Ricks.

"To the extent that we can, we [told the elected officials] that we want [these people] to continue to make contributions to the board," said Fleming.

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Our loss, Corzine gain

Jersey Gov raids Paper for new mouthpiece

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Still hobbling from his nearly fatal car accident in April, New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine has poached beloved police-beat reporter Lilo H. Stainton from The Brooklyn Paper to be his new press secretary.

The governor's office made the announcement on Tuesday.

Before joining The Brooklyn Paper staff in 2003, Stainton, 37, worked for six years as a reporter in Gannett's capital bureau in Trenton. Earlier, she was a staff reporter on central Jersey's Home News Tribune and the New York Daily News.

While at Gannett, Stainton won two New Jersey Press Association awards and one National Headliner Award for Public Service for individual and team coverage of pay hikes in the executive and legislative branches of the New Jersey government.

She had been working for The Brooklyn Paper for nearly two years when she got a call "out of the blue a couple weeks ago from a friend ... in Democratic politics down there," she said.

Stainton interviewed with Corzine on Saturday at the governor's beach house in Island Beach State Park on the Jersey Shore.



Brooklyn Paper police reporter Lilo H. Stainton is now New Jersey Gov. Corzine's spokeswoman.

"He was in a bathing suit," said Stainton. "I was in a suit in 90-degree weather."

"He's a very interesting guy, very not at all aloof," added the governor's newest loyal employee. "You might think that coming from money [Corzine made millions as an investment banker before winning election to the U.S. Senate and the New Jersey statehouse], he'd act standoffish. That's not at all the case."

Stainton said she would find a "crash pad" in or near Trenton, but that Bedford-Stuyvesant will continue to be her primary residence.

"Brooklyn will always be my home," said Stainton. "My husband and I built our home here. We're in the middle of renovations, I might add."

Paper Editor Gersh Kuntzman wished Stainton luck — though with his left hand. "Of course, we wish Lilo well in her new endeavor, though as journalists, we find it shocking that she would leave such a noble profession as newspaper work to enter the eternal sausage-grinder that is so-called 'public service,'" Kuntzman said.

Stainton is replacing Anthony Coley, who was promoted to Corzine's Communications Director. She begins her new gig on June 14.

Chestnut's #1...

Continued from page 1

win in a pickup softball game."

Detectors immediately suggested that Chestnut could never have chewed up such high numbers had he been competing in the heat and humidity of a normal summer day, rather than in an air-conditioned mall in suburban Tempe. Indeed, even Shea admitted that wet weather at Coney typically reduces consumption by "two to five dogs."

"Remember that very hot July 4, 2003? Kobayashi, who had never eaten less than 50 suddenly could only down 44-1/2," Shea said. "He still won, but he would've committed seppuku had we not reminded him that the steamy temps were to blame."

Still, Shea said Chestnut's 59-1/2 HDBs was such a "monumental" performance that the man they call "Jaws" would still have broken the record even if he'd been in a sauna.

"The true challenge will come — as it always does, like the Grim Reaper himself — on July 4 at Coney Island," Shea added. "If he can put up numbers like that at the actual contest, he'll go down in the history books, and I'm not talking about Wikipedia, but a real history book."

Kobayashi did not respond to e-mails from this reporter, who (full disclosure) served as his judge and counter during his unprecedented six-in-a-row championships from 2001-2006 at the July 4 contest.

That an American now holds the world record for hot-dog-eating brings the sport of competitive gluttony back to what

some call its glory days. Before the so-called "Japanese Invasion" of 1996, American eaters such as Ed "The Maphoth Monster" Krachie, Mike "The Scholar" DeVito and Frank "Hollywood" Dellarosa lorded over the champion's table.

But none of those fabled frankophiles ever ate more than 22-1/4 HDBs. And ever since the diminutive Japanese phenom Hirofumi Nakajima beat the enormous Krachie in a one-on-one staff-you-faceoff in December, 1996, the coveted Mustard Yellow International Belt has remained around thin Japanese waists for every year except 1999.

The most widely accepted explanation for the Japanese prowess is Krachie's own "Belt of Fat" theory. The 300-pound Krachie argued in a well-sourced (but ultimately rejected by the Journal of the American Medical Association) paper that his own abundant adipose tissue around his midsection prevented his stomach from expanding to hold more hot dogs, while the thin Japanese eaters had highly developed abdominal rectus muscles that allowed the stomach to stretch and contain more and more

chewed-up hot dogs and buns. Chestnut is the greatest of the new wave of lightweight American eaters — the so-called "Thin-can" — who are leading the charge to keep the belt on American soil.

But first, Chestnut will have to win it back on July 4. As they say in the competitive eating world, that's a tough nut to eat. 59-1/2 of.

Jaw-dropping feat

When Joey Chestnut downed 59-1/2 hot dogs and buns in 12 minutes last week, he not only set a new world record, but also took care of his eating for at least a week. Here's how Chestnut's stunning performance shapes up (or doesn't shape up):

TOTAL CALORIES	18,385 (9.2 days' worth)
TOTAL SODIUM	40,698 mg (17.2 days' worth)
TOTAL FAT	1,195.95 g (18.4 days' worth)

ASTERISK...

Continued from page 1

Tempe, Arizona simply can't be known until he does it again.

In the heat of an actual competition. After all, last year at Coney Island, with the temperatures and humidity both well above 80, Chestnut finished 1-3/4 dogs behind his nemesis, Takemi Kobayashi, who ate 53-3/4 and captured his sixth consecutive Mustard Yellow International Belt, the world-renowned symbol of gustatory greatness.

Chestnut dodged my calls about whether the air conditioning was responsible for his sudden ability to eat 59-1/2 HDBs, so this reporter—humbly speaking, the foremost

competitive eating writer in the nation (no, you could look it up ... on Wikipedia!) — did the best test thing: I conducted a completely scientific experiment at an indoor Nathan's stand. With the air conditioning blowing at full bore, I was able to down two HDBs in just one minute (ouch a pace, if sustained over 12 minutes, would have won me the Mustard Yellow Belt only a decade ago, by the way).

Then I bought two more dogs and took them outside, into the heat and mugginess of a normal New York summer day.

I struggled to get even one of the dogs down my quivering gullet. My face broke out in a sweat (that's real gulfic salt saturation in there, my friends) and I got woozy from the heat.

The result of my experiment was clear: Air conditioning is to competitive eating what steroids are to baseball or, more accurately, the power nail driver is to Amish barn-raising.

Naturally, George Shea, the chairman of the International Federation of Competitive Eating, thought this columnist was out of line.

"First of all, your metaphor is absurd," Shea said. "If anything, air conditioning is more like Lax, the legal drug that thoroughbred trainers sometimes use."

"But your larger point is even more misguided," Shea added. "Yes, there is no question that air conditioning helps competitive eaters, but the difference between Chestnut's 59-1/2 and Kobayashi's 53-3/4 is so vast as to trump any so-called 'advantage' that Chestnut got from the indoor contest."

Shea admitted he's started to hear the drumbest for an asterisk — at least until Chestnut beats Kobayashi fair and sweaty on July 4 — but is resisting the call.

"I don't want to question your integrity, but your integrity is questionable," Shea said. "This will all be settled on July 4. And by the way, did I tell you I'm bringing in a giant from India this year?"

Shea was apparently talking about P. Theyagajan, the 7'8" chicken tikka masala-eating champion of the world, who will be making his debut on July 4.

And he says my integrity is questionable!

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

June 9, 2007

All the page

GO's guide to the borough's best summer books

By Sarah McCormick
for The Brooklyn Paper

The Brooklyn Book Festival is fast approaching and it's time to get serious about your summer reading. After all, by the time the September festival rolls around, there could be a new Jonathan to obsess over — certainly you wouldn't want to be the last to know.

With only three months to go, we've compiled a list of the best new books from borough-based writers and publishers. So once you've plowed through Harry Potter's latest adventure, toss these page-turners in the beach bag and start reading; whether it's a quiet day in Prospect Park, a flight overseas or a trip on the L train, don't leave home without one.

"The Cure for Anything is Salt Water: How I Threw My Life Overboard and Found Happiness at Sea" by Mary South, out now

By most people's standards, Bedford-Stuyvesant's Mary South had it made: a successful career in book publishing and her own home, but somewhere around age 40, something changed. In her first book, South — a novice sailor — swaps her "normal" life to fulfill her dream of being one with the open sea. The memoir traces South's journey and follows her around the world as she confronts her past and reinvents herself.

"The Importance of Being Dangerous" by David Dante Trout, out now

"The Importance of Being Dangerous," from Downtown Brooklyn resident David Dante Trout, is set during the economic boom of the 1990s, and tells the tale of a single mom, a dedicated defense lawyer and a troubled comedian struggling for a piece of the pie. When the three join a Harlem investment club, they plot to scam wealthy people who have harmed the neighborhood's African-American community. But when one member's fishy friend joins in, things go from dark to dangerous.

"The City in Crimson Cloak" by Adil Erdogan, out July 7

New from DUMBO's Soft Skull Press and recently translated from Turkish, "The City in Crimson Cloak" definitely isn't the most uplifting book on GO's summer reading list



Stacked: Alicia Mason-Guild, of Carroll Gardens, picks out books for beach reading at DUMBO's PS. Bookshop.

the book, set in Rio de Janeiro, follows the main character Ozgur through bits and pieces of her unfinished, semi-autobiographical novel. Through the book-within-a-book approach, a broken woman struggles to make peace with life as she approaches her death.

he left behind: a wife, a long-time lover and a sister. Five years after his death, the women begin to piece together his life for two competing biographers. The clashing perspectives of the womenfolk result in loads of dirty laundry and the uncovering of a scandalous second life Feldman led just over the Brooklyn Bridge.

"The Great Man" by Kate Christensen, out Aug. 14

Greenpoint's Kate Christensen, author of "The Epicure's Lament," tells the tale of New York artist Oscar Feldman in this contemporary novel. More importantly, it focuses on the many ladies

"Maynard and Jessica" by Rudolph Delson, out Sept. 18

It's a bit late for what's traditionally considered summer, but with the warm autumns we've been having, this quirky

Gale force reading

Sure, we all like to think of ourselves as the literary type, toting a smart new book around town like a peacock showing off his plumage. The fact of the matter is, though, nothing says summer like a steamy romance read on the sand.

Harlequin romance scribe Barbara Gale has not only lived in Park Slope for "most of her adult life," but has also set several of her novels, including the racy interracial romance "Flicking Up the Pieces," in and around the borough. Gale's most-recent book, "Finding His Way Home," came out in February, but the inexhaustible romantic has another tome, "The Farmer Takes a Wife," coming out in September.

Despite all of the time she devotes to her bodice-rippers, Gale still manages to be reading five books simultaneously. GO Brooklyn's Jessica Grose quizzed the inveterate book lover on her summer reading picks, her love of libraries and the most romantic spots in Kings County.

GO Brooklyn: What are the best beach reads for the summer of 2007?

Barbara Gale: I don't really differentiate between beach books and regular books, but right now reading "The Secret Life of Bees" by Sue Monk Kidd, "The Shipping News" by E. Annie Proulx, "The Naming of the Dead" by Ian Rankin, "The Tenth Circle" by Jodi Picoult and "Rise and Shine" by Anna Quindlen.

GO: Since you're an expert on matters of the heart, what are the most romantic summer spots in Brooklyn?

BG: It doesn't get more romantic than Prospect Park, but there are also a lot of great beaches. There's the smallest gem in Manhattan Beach and I also love Gravesend where the boats are. You can't miss with long walks at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, especially the Shakespeare Garden, which has every flower mentioned in Shakespeare's plays. I'm also a foodie, so if you're looking for a romantic meal, search out Red Rose on Smith Street.

GO: What is your favorite place to read?

BG: I have a house in [upstate] Delaware County, and I love to read in my hammock.

GO: How do you find time to read so much?

BG: I'm up at 5 am to write, so I don't read during the day, but by 7 or 8 pm, I'm ready to do some reading and go to sleep. I must have 300 books by my side. I am a library aficionado and I'm always giving away books as gifts. Even though I read so much, if you don't get me by page 50, I'm going to put a book down. There are too many books in the world and I have to read them all.

romance could still be read on a patio or in the park. Author Rudolph Delson hatched the idea for this book — an off-the-wall love story — on a walk through Park Slope. He writes about misanthropic Maynard, a complex ex-musician with a slew of quirks, and a passion for film. Fashion faux pas on the subway, and Jessica, a true romantic Californian with dreams of a life in the big city. Told by 35 narrators, including the 6 train itself, this is a classic New York tale.

EVENT

June's march

Celebrate Brooklyn kicked off on June 6 with an interfaith service at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Park Slope, followed by four days of events marking the annual celebration of gay life in Brooklyn and honoring the folks who have made significant contributions to the community.

Before anyone breaks out their go-go boots, though, running shoes will be the sensible choice for the 5K run on June 9 that will benefit the Park Slope Geriatric Day Center. If running in the race doesn't leave you completely spent, try your hand at the day-long Multicultural Festival along Prospect Park West. But the real fun starts at 9 pm when the parade, lead by Council Speaker Christine Quinn, kicks off at 15th Street and Prospect Park West. The colorful floats and fella in fricks will then head up Seventh Avenue to Flatbush Avenue — and even feature Brooklyn Beep (pictured) in his Pridemobile with the flashing lights spelling out "M-A-R-S-H-I-V."

Brooklyn Pride runs June 6 to 9. For a complete calendar of events, visit www.brooklynpride.org.

— Christopher Murray

EVENT

Fair and Flare

The Renegade Craft Fair came to McCarran Park Pool in 2003 after two successful years in the Windy City as a place for arts-and-crafty types to ply their wares.

"We're creative ourselves and couldn't find anything that catered to the kind of contemporary crafts we were making," founder Sue Blatt said.

This year's Fair will have more than 200 vendors from Brooklyn and around the world. Schnack will even be there with a cart to keep shoppers satiated while they hop from booth to booth.

The Fair also does a great deal to build up the crafts community and let shoppers spend their money locally.

I think a lot of people in Brooklyn are really into the idea of buying original pieces from indie shops and trying to avoid the big chains," Keith Carullo of Fred Flare told GO Brooklyn. "At the Renegade Craft Fair, you get to meet all the vendors who actually make the products so you know your dollar goes directly to them instead of a faceless corporation."

The Renegade Craft Fair will take place from 11 am-6 pm on June 16 and 17 at the McCarran Park Pool (Lorimer Street between Driggs and Bayard avenues in Greenpoint). Free. For information, visit www.renegadecraft.com.

— Adam Rathe

DANCE

Kids 'n' play

It isn't only rock music that Brooklyn's kids are getting noticed for. On Saturday, June 9, "Hip-Hop Generation Next" in Red Hook's Coffey Park will showcase the rapping, dancing and DJ talents of the borough's young MCs.

"Growing up, hip-hop gave me something to do," said Brandon Albright, the event's artistic director, who highlighted performances by students from PS 27 and kids from Fort Greene's Urban Assembly School of Music and Art.

As part of the annual Red Hook Block Party, the first-time event is open to anyone who cares to stop by, but is focused on encouraging the neighborhood's children.

"Hip-Hop Generation Next" will kick off at 2 pm on June 9 at Coffey Park (Richard Street at Pioneer Street in Red Hook). For information, visit www.dancinginthestreets.org or call (212) 625-3505.

— Danielle Douglas

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It's no fluke

Brooklyn's Michael Salmon hits it big on the Food Network

By Tina Barry
for The Brooklyn Paper

The chef wouldn't dish. I wasn't asking for a secret recipe. I only wanted to know who won the reality show.

But Michael Salmon, a Brooklyn Heights resident and a contestant on the chef show-down, "The Next Food Network Star," wouldn't spill the garbanzo about whether he — or one of his 10 toque-wearing rivals — will end up winning the contest and getting his own show.

"I really can't tell you," he said.

That was the only moment in our meeting when the usually chatty Salmon — "like the fish" — was at a loss for words. At 53, the tall, bald-headed restaurant professional is no neophyte to interviews. From 2005 to 2006, he was the host of "Wild Salmon," a radio program on Air America, and, before that, he starred in "Secrets From the Kitchen," a 1980s cooking show. It was his on-air rapport with the audience that led Salmon to his current gig.

"I was on the radio when the first 'Network Star' program was running," he said, clad in a well-cut suit and not his chef's whites. "One of my listeners called in and said, 'You should take your mouth and put it on television.'"

When Salmon checked the requirements, though, he realized he only had a few days to meet the show's application deadline. In that time, he had to produce a three-minute video that answered the question, "Why do you think you should be a Food Network star?" Despite the crunch on time,



TV
"The Next Food Network Star" airs on the Food Network on Sunday nights at 9 pm through July 22. For information, visit www.foodnetwork.com.

Salmon met the deadline. "I got a call the next Wednesday saying they'd love to have me. The call left me speech-

less which doesn't happen too often in my life."

He beat out thousands of other contestants, but this guy is certainly well prepared. After receiving his degree from the Culinary Institute of America, Salmon worked at the famed 21 Club and for Alain Ducasse (now the dean emeritus at the French Culinary Institute in Manhattan) and Jeffrey Zakarian (chef at Country, Town and 44 in the Royalton Hotel).

For the past seven years,

Salmon has been the director of operations for Cucina & Company in Macy's Cellar, as well as Macy's Cellar Bar & Grill. But all that work in Manhattan hasn't made Salmon resistant to the charms of a Brooklyn restaurant. He cited Robin Des Bois on Court Street and Le Petit Marche in Brooklyn Heights as his favorite local eateries.

With a work history like that, joining a group of younger — contestants ages range from 25-39 — and less-

experienced finalists still fazed him. "It was humbling," he sighed.

Like any reality show, the contestants are chosen as their personalities, and this season's series has a formidable round-up of characters. Salmon plays the role of the elder statesman: helpful to the others, but always competitive. His experience and know-how is paired with that of contestants like the stiletto-wearing Nikki Shaw and the cigar-chomping, Tony Soprano-like Tommy Gella.

With all of these chefs, surely Salmon had beef with someone, right? None that he would cup to, at least.

"They were all great," Salmon said. "There wasn't a single one who couldn't be a Food Network star."

Salmon wouldn't rag on the judges, Bob Tuschman or Susie Fogelson. He didn't even have a bad word to say about icy guest chef Robert Irvine, he of the Austrian accent that could make a Gestapo guard shake in his well-polished boots.

"I have a tremendous amount of respect for the man," Salmon said. "He didn't scare me."

What did rock this seemingly unshakable chef wasn't pulling off a wedding dinner for 100 guests in just six hours or any of the other challenges thrown his way, but, as he put it, "the challenge of being myself."

"You have no access to the outside world: no TV, no magazines or newspapers, no telephone," he said. "They took away me being the boss, me being a father, a son, me being a boyfriend. I had to be myself without all those relationships defining me. That was the challenge."

Cook like a star

Michael Salmon and other finalists had to submit 30 recipes to the selection committee to even be considered for "The Next Food Network Star." His "Orange-Rosemary Brisket with Pan Gravy" is the kind of "comfortable, simple food" he told GO Brooklyn that he enjoys preparing. His recipes, said Salmon, are "like instructions from Betty Crocker's kitchen. They work."

Orange-Rosemary Brisket with Pan Gravy

Yield: 8-10 servings

8 lbs. kosher brisket, first cut, trimmed of excess fat
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 ounces olive oil
2 large Spanish onions, diced
2 large carrots, diced
2 stalks celery, diced
4 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1 cup red wine
2 naval oranges, zested and juiced
2 large sprigs rosemary, picked from stem, plus 2 more sprigs for garnish
6 cups beef stock

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Season meat liberally on all sides with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven over med-high heat. Place meat in pot, fatty side down. Brown the meat on both sides, about 5 to 7 minutes each. Remove meat and all but 6 tablespoons fat. Add the onions, carrots, celery and garlic to pan and cook until deep golden brown. Add the wine and deglaze. Add orange juice, zest and rosemary. Bring to a boil and add the meat. Add beef stock until it almost covers the meat and bring this mix to a boil. Cover pot and place in oven. Bake for approximately two hours. To test doneness, stick a large fork into the center of the meat. If it slides in and out easily, it's finished. Remove meat from the liquid and let stand at room temp for 30 minutes before slicing.

For the gravy: Degrease the remaining liquid in the pot. Pour into a food processor and blend. Adjust seasoning. Transfer the gravy into a 2-quart saucepan and warm up before serving. Adjust thickness with beef stock if needed. Cut the meat on the bias, against the grain. Place on a large serving platter and top with hot gravy. Garnish with rosemary sprigs.

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Quite a 'Prospect'

'Celebrate' brings summer music back to Slope

By Chris Varmus
For The Brooklyn Paper

There were no free concerts in Prospect Park in the mid-1970s, when the Neville brothers were living in a basement apartment on Union Street. In fact, Prospect Park was someplace you just didn't go at night. So Aaron Neville and his brothers may not recognize the place, but they're ready to get reacquainted at the kickoff to "Celebrate Brooklyn" this Thursday night.

The Nevilles are definitely eager to visit the old neighborhood. "Don't worry," Aaron said, "We gonna put on a kickin' show for y'all up there in Brooklyn."

This year marks both the 30th anniversary of the Neville Brothers and the 40th anniversary of Aaron Neville's "Tell It Like It Is," which peaked at number two on the U.S. Billboard Top 100 and at number one on the U.S. R&B chart back in 1967.

GO Brooklyn asked Aaron Neville when he finally got him on the line, at a roadside restaurant in Virginia, with time running out on his cellphone battery — to "tell it like it is." Is there a dominant brother at the moment? Any sibling rivalry to speak of?

"We're all the dominant brother," he said with self-assurance. "Cyril's the baby, Art's the oldest — that's why what we call him Poppa Funk — but we're all dominant."

And it's been a long time coming. "We've been trying to get the Nevilles for a long time," said Jack Walsh, director of "Celebrate Brooklyn." "We're really glad the timing finally worked out."

Born and raised in Park Slope,



The Hold Steady plays the Prospect Park bandshell on Aug. 9.

Walsh has a good sense of the neighborhood and what it stands for. "We wanted to create a concert series that would feel [like it was] about the community," he said, "like it's not just sort of plopped down by some outside promoter."

And it looks like Brooklyn's in for a lot of hot summer nights. With 25 concerts this summer, two more than ever before, "Celebrate Brooklyn" is the city's longest-running free performing arts festival, and lures over 250,000 fans to the park each year. Launched in 1979 to bring people back to Prospect Park after years of neglect, "Celebrate Brooklyn" has survived thanks to the gentrification that it helped in part to foster.

Among other pioneering pursuits, "Celebrate Brooklyn" is experimenting with music paired with film; staging performances of live original compositions scored to silent films by Hitchcock and Laurel & Hardy, as well as a showing of "Him Kisi Se Kum Nahin," a classic Bollywood gangster film, followed by a Bollywood disco dance party.

Through the concerts are for the most part free, in order to ensure the future of the program, there will be several special benefit concerts with tickets priced at \$30. One will feature Ani DiFranco and the other Manu Chao, returning after last year's successful concert for two engagements this year. Additionally, our over-cafeinated

ears perked up when we heard that, for the first year ever, the festival will have an official sponsor: Starbucks. As part of the sponsorship arrangement, visitors to each performance will be treated to free samples of Starbucks' coffee and summer beverages.

But don't worry — just because it's the green behemoth and not a local coffee bar, that doesn't mean Celebrate Brooklyn's line-up has gone all corporate. Diversity remains a hallmark, and this year's roster as eclectic as ever.

"What we're trying to do is put a lot of fresh ideas out there," said Walsh, "and then kind of infuse the lineup with recognizable names that resonate in an interesting way."

There are acts as radical and far ranging as the Sierra Leone Refugee All-Stars — who are actually refugees — and Isaac Delgado, who recently immigrated from Cuba and plays a kind of salsa-like music known as "pimba." What's more, the opener that night is the lead singer of Yerba Buena, Cuba's foremost revolutionary hip-hop group, and KRS-One, who admits to spending more than a few nights in Prospect Park as a homeless youth in the early '80s, will be returning to triumphantly rock the mic alongside Laibon Mecca of Digable Planets.

Last summer's TV On The Radio concert was a revelation, as the stars (Brooklyn band) on the cup of broader success) aligned to create a once-in-a-lifetime kind of event. The Aug. 9 concert featuring several Brooklyn bands, including indie rock darlings the Hold Steady, might be this year's frontrunner to replicate that "time and place" moment. But there are countless candidates: Lou Reed was recently added to the bill (which already included Ben E. King and others) of a tribute to "Viva Las Vegas" by the late singer's band.

What it all adds up to, Walsh modestly hopes, is "something worth getting out of the house for on a summer night."

"Celebrate Brooklyn" will begin on June 14 with an opening night gala and the Neville Brothers in concert. See our "Celebrate Brooklyn" calendar below for more information.

No 'what if' — Joan is one of us

She might have lost the nose ring and moved off of the pop charts and into Cobble Hill, but singer-songwriter Joan Osborne, who will be performing on June 16 at the Prospect Park Bandshell as part of Celebrate Brooklyn, is still singing. GO Brooklyn's Chris Varmus caught up with Osborne, who dished on Celebrate Brooklyn, being a mom and life after "One of Us," the God-themed tune that put her on the charts (and in the Religious Right's crosshairs). Since that 1995 album went triple-platinum, she's put out only two more discs of original material (the 2000 follow-up "Ridiculous Love" and "Pretty Little Stranger," which came out last year), plus two CDs of R&B covers.

GO Brooklyn: What was your introduction to New York, and how did your music career get started?

Joan Osborne: I first came to New York to go to film school and fell into the roots blues music scene that was happening in the late '80s and early '90s. Growing up in Kentucky, I wasn't exposed to



a lot of the music that would end up having the biggest influence on me — people like Etta James, Helen Wolfe and Otis Redding. I sang at my first open mic kind of by accident after a friend dared me. After that, I was hooked. I started performing more and put a band together; we'd do four one-hour sets at all kinds of places. The first recordings I did were live. We made a CD to sell at shows. That's how we got from place to place; it was gas money and maybe a meal.

GO: You're best known for your hit song "One of Us." How did that early exposure

change the course of your career?

JO: That song was actually written by Eric Baz Luirier as something he wanted to do himself, and he brought a sort of disco-like, Nick Cave-ish version of it into the studio where we were making "Relish" [Osborne's first album]. Rick Chertoff, the producer, had the idea to do it as a pop song, and so I did this really innocent version, like a question asked by a child. The success of that song has been kind of a double-edged sword, obviously, ultimately positive because it's enabled people to get to know me, but there's been a bit of pressure to recreate that level of success. I'm not in the pop mainstream anymore and that's freed me up to do more of what I like. The new album is very much a Philly Soul/early '70s sound. There are personal songs as well as covers, and it's all integrated seamlessly.

GO: Was it a challenge to fit your new songs into that older style?

JO: It's actually kind of liberating. You know, it's a satisfy-

ingly simple problem to solve. Songwriting is about taking the personal and making it universal, so that doesn't change, even over time.

GO: How has being a mother changed your perspective in terms of songwriting?

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Joan Osborne and the Jazz Passengers will perform at "Celebrate Brooklyn" on June 16 at 7:30 pm at the Prospect Park Bandshell (enter at Ninth Street and Prospect Park West). Free. For information, visit www.celebratebrooklyn.org.

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Quite a 'Prospect'

'Celebrate' brings summer music back to Slope

By Chris Varmus
For The Brooklyn Paper

There were no free concerts in Prospect Park in the mid-1970s, when the Neville brothers were living in a basement apartment on Union Street. In fact, Prospect Park was someplace you just didn't go at night. So Aaron Neville and his brothers may not recognize the place, but they're ready to get reacquainted at the kickoff to "Celebrate Brooklyn" this Thursday night.

The Nevilles are definitely eager to visit the old neighborhood. "Don't worry," Aaron said, "We gonna put on a kickin' show for y'all up there in Brooklyn."

This year marks both the 30th anniversary of the Neville Brothers and the 40th anniversary of Aaron Neville's "Tell It Like It Is," which peaked at number two on the U.S. Billboard Top 100 and at number one on the U.S. R&B chart back in 1967.

GO Brooklyn asked Aaron Neville when we finally got him on the line, at a roadside restaurant in Virginia, with time running out on his cellphone battery — to "tell it like it is." Is there a dominant brother at the moment? Any sibling rivalry to speak of?

"We're all the dominant," he said with self-assurance. "Cyril's the baby, Art's the oldest — that's why what we call him Poppa Funk — but we're all dominant."

And it's been a long time coming. "We've been trying to get the Nevilles for a long time," said Jack Walsh, director of "Celebrate Brooklyn." "We're really glad the timing finally worked out."

Born and raised in Park Slope,



The Hold Steady plays the Prospect Park bandshell on Aug. 9.

Walsh has a good sense of the neighborhood and what it stands for. "We wanted to create a concert series that would feel [like it was] about the community," he said, "like it's not just sort of plopped down by some outside promoter."

And it looks like Brooklyn's in for a lot of hot summer nights. With 25 concerts this summer, two more than ever before, "Celebrate Brooklyn" is the city's longest-running free performing arts festival, and lures over 250,000 fans to the park each year. Launched in 1979 to bring people back into Prospect Park after years of neglect, "Celebrate Brooklyn" has survived thanks to the gentrification that it helped in part to foster.

Among other pioneering pursuits, "Celebrate Brooklyn" is experimenting with music paired with film; staging performances of live original compositions scored to silent films by Hitchcock and Laurel & Hardy, as well as a showing of "Him Kisi Se Kum Nahin," a classic Bollywood gangster film, followed by a Bollywood disco dance party.

Through the concerts are for the most part free, in order to ensure the future of the program, there will be several special benefit concerts with tickets priced at \$30. One will feature Ani DiFranco and the other Manu Chao, returning after last year's successful concert for two engagements this year.

Additionally, our over-caf-finated

ears perked up when we heard that, for the first year ever, the festival will have an official sponsor: Starbucks. As part of the sponsorship arrangement, visitors to each performance will be treated to free samples of Starbucks' coffee and summer beverages.

But don't worry — just because it's the green behemoth and not a local coffee bar, that doesn't mean Celebrate Brooklyn's line-up has gone all corporate. Diversity remains a hallmark, and this year's roster is eclectic as ever.

"What we're trying to do is put a lot of fresh ideas out there," said Walsh, "and then kind of infuse the lineup with recognizable names that resonate in an interesting way."

There are acts as radical and far ranging as the Sierra Leone Refugee All-Stars — who are actually refugees — and Isaac Delgado, who recently immigrated from Cuba and plays a kind of salsa-like music known as "pimba." What's more, the opener that night is the lead singer of Yerba Buena, Cuba's foremost revolutionary hip-hop group. And KRS-One, who admits to spending more than a few nights in Prospect Park as a homeless youth in the early '80s, will be returning to triumphantly rock the mic alongside La-Meeza of Digable Planets.

Last summer's TV On The Radio concert was a revelation, as the stars (Brooklyn band) on the cup of broader success) aligned to create a once-in-a-lifetime kind of event. The Aug. 9 concert featuring several Brooklyn bands, including indie rock darlings the Hold Steady, might be this year's frontrunner to replicate that "time and place" moment. But there are countless candidates: Lou Reed was recently added to the bill (which already included Ben E. King and others) of a tribute to "Viva Las Vegas" soul singer Joe Bonomo.

What it all adds up to, Walsh modestly hopes, is "something worth getting out of the house for on a summer night."

"Celebrate Brooklyn" will begin on June 14 with an opening night gala and the Neville Brothers in concert. See our "Celebrate Brooklyn" calendar below for more information.

No 'what if' — Joan is one of us

She might have lost the nose ring and moved off of the pop charts and into Cobble Hill, but singer-songwriter Joan Osborne, who will be performing on June 16 at the Prospect Park Bandshell as part of Celebrate Brooklyn, is still singing. GO Brooklyn's Chris Varmus caught up with Osborne, who dished on Celebrate Brooklyn, being a mom and life after "One of Us," the God-themed tune that put her on the charts (and in the Religious Right's crosshairs). Since that 1995 album went triple-platinum, she's put out only two more discs of original material (the 2000 follow-up "Ridiculous Love" and "Pretty Little Stranger," which came out last year), plus two CDs of R&B covers.

GO Brooklyn: What was your introduction to New York, and how did your music career get started?

Joan Osborne: I first came to New York to go to film school and fell into the roots blues music scene that was happening in the late '80s and early '90s. Growing up in Kentucky, I wasn't exposed to



a lot of the music that would end up having the biggest influence on me — people like Etta James, Helen Wolfe and Otis Redding. I sang at my first open mic kind of by accident after a friend dared me. After that, I was hooked. I started performing more and put a band together; we'd do four one-hour sets at all kinds of places. The first recordings I did were live. We made a CD to sell at shows. That's how we got from place to place; it was gas money or maybe a meal.

GO: You're best known for your hit song "One of Us." How did that early exposure

change the course of your career?

JO: That song was actually written by Eric Bazilian as something he wanted to do himself, and he brought a sort of disco-like, Nick Cave-ish version of it into the studio where we were making "Relish" [Osborne's first album]. Rick Chertoff, the producer, had the idea to do it as a pop song, and so I did this really innocent version, like a question asked by a child. The success of that song has been kind of a double-edged sword, obviously, ultimately positive because it's enabled people to get to know me, but there's been a bit of pressure to recreate that level of success. I'm not in the pop mainstream anymore and that's freed me up to do more of what I like. The new album is very much a Philly Soul/early '70s sound. There are personal songs as well as covers, and it's all integrated seamlessly.

GO: Was it a challenge to fit your new songs into that older style?

JO: It's actually kind of liberating. You know, it's a satisfy-

ingly simple problem to solve. Songwriting is about taking the personal and making it universal, so that doesn't change, even over time.

GO: How has being a mother changed your perspective in terms of songwriting?

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Celebrate Brooklyn calendar

Want to spend the summer in Prospect Park with New York City's longest running free performing arts festival? Soak up the sun (or the moon beams) and all the free music, dance, theater and film you can take. All performances are rain or shine, except July 6. Tickets are free unless otherwise noted. For information, call (718) 855-7882 or visit www.celebratebrooklyn.org. — Melissa Saks

Thursday, July 14 at 8 pm. The Neville Brothers. Opening night gala, honoring MTV President Christina Norman, prize for concert at 5:30 pm. Tickets, for \$300 and up, include reserved seats, cocktails, dinner, and dancing. Call (718) 855-7882, x33.

Saturday, June 16 at 7:30 pm. Joan Osborne, the Jazz Passengers the Supremes Project

Thursday, June 21 at 7:30 pm. The Richard Thompson Band, Oklahele

Friday, June 22 at 7:30 pm. Ralph Stanley & The Clinch Mountain Boys, James Reams & The Barnstormers

Tuesday, June 26 and Wednesday, June 27 at 7:30 pm. Benefit concerts to support "Celebrate Brooklyn" featuring Manu Chao & Radio Bemba Sound System. Tickets are available at www.ticketmaster.com for \$30.

Friday, June 29 at 7 pm. Groove Collective, Ravi Coltrane, Craig Harris

Saturday, June 30 at 7 pm. The Stills, Sam Roberts Band, Malajube

Thursday, July 5 at 7:30 pm. Isaac Delgado, Komara Laupart, Potolera

Friday, July 6 at 7:30 pm (Rain Date: Saturday, July 7 at 7:30 pm). The American premiere of South African collaboration, RENE & Caratista for Voice, Tape and Testimony

Thursday, July 12 at 7:30 pm. Noche Flamenca,

Andrew J. Neme & CPD Plus, Darrah Carr Dance

Friday, July 13 at 7 pm. Zoe, the Pinker Tones, Cielies

Saturday, July 14 at 8 pm. Brooklyn Philharmonic with Music Director Michael Christie, guest artists Mark O'Connor and Maya Beiser

Sunday, July 15 at 4 pm. Frank London's Yiddish Carnival featuring Frank London, the Klezmatics, Fnyash Finkel, Wolf Krakowski, Roberto Thompson, Frank London's Klezmer All-stars featuring Maracatu New York, Joanne Born, Adrienne Cooper, the Festival Latin Jewish Carnival Orchestra & Social Justice Sing

Wednesday, July 18 at 7:30 pm. Benefit concert in support of "Celebrate Brooklyn" featuring Ani DiFranco. Tickets are available at www.ticketmaster.com for \$37.

Thursday, July 19 at 7:30 pm. Music & Movies Series: "Blacksat" with Alloy Orchestra, Morley

Friday, July 20 at 7:30 pm. Bobby "Blue" Bland, Catherine Russell

Saturday, July 21 at 7 pm. Hal Willner's Doc Pomus Project, featuring Ben J. King, Teddy Thompson, Steven Bernstein, Joel Don, Peter Guzzetta, Shannon McNally, and others

Sunday, July 22 at 5 pm. Dan Zane & Friends (Special guests TBA)

Thursday, July 26 at 8 pm. Bill T. Jones & Anne Zane Dance Company performing "Another Evening" (Bow Down)

Friday, July 27 at 7:30 pm. Music & Movies Series: Laurel & Hardy with the Millennium Territory Orchestra, Ethan Lipton

Saturday, July 28 at 2 pm. Boricua Festival featuring Tito Rojas, Joe Cuba Sextet, Viento de Agua and others

Thursday, August 2 at 8 pm. Brave New World Repertory Theatre performing "Walk Whiteman's Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" with violinist Jenny Scheinman

Friday, August 3 at 7:30 pm. Lyricist Lounge with KRS-One, LaJazz Mecca, Biza, Beat Entertainment, Turntable Anthill

Saturday, August 4 at 7:30 pm. Kasson, Borge

Thursday, August 9 at 7 pm. The Hold Steady, the Big Sleep, the Teenage Players

Friday, August 10 at 7:30 pm. Music & Movies Series: Bollywood in Brooklyn: Bollywood classic, "Hum Kis Se Kum Nahin" with DJ Beka's Bollywood Disco

Saturday, August 11 from 2-9 pm. African Festival: Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars, Sekouba Bambino, Stella Chiweshe, Orko Mawuti, Baye Kouyate and Les Tougaraques

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9 DAYS...

Continued from page 2

BROOKLYN FREE PARTY Lambda Independent Democrats host a party \$25, 6 pm to 9 pm, 444 15th St., between Prospect Park West and Eighth Avenue, apt. 8. Sorry, no phone number.

NEW WORKS: Jolie Restaurant presents an exhibit "Jolie de Vins," new works by Jay Battie, 520 Atlantic Ave. Call for info, (718) 488-0777.

SUN, JUNE 10

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

WILD TOUR: "Wildman" Steve Brill leads his wild food and ecology tour of Prospect Park. Learn about the edible and medicinal plants and greens found in the park. \$12-\$6 kids, 11-15 am. Meet at Grand Army Plaza entrance to the park. (718) 635-2153.

HEIGHTS TOUR: Big Onion Tours takes a walk across the Brooklyn Bridge and through Brooklyn Heights. \$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 students. 1 pm. Meet at southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers streets, lower Manhattan. (212) 439-1090.

HOUSE TOUR: Annual self-guided tour of Victorian Flatbush. \$20, 1 pm to 6 pm. (718) 659-3800. For info visit www.bkonline.com.

TREES OF BROOKLYN: Urban Park Rangers host a walking series dedicated to the trees of

Brooklyn Parks. 4 pm. Owl's Head Park. Meet at Calais Road entrance to park. For info, call 311. **Free.**

STUDIO TOUR: Annual Red Hook/Carroll Gardens open studio tour. Noon to 6 pm. See Sat., June 9.

ART WALK: Atlantic Avenue hosts its annual event. 1 pm to 6 pm. See Sat., June 9.

PERFORMANCE

ARTS FEST: In celebration of Caribbean Heritage Month, Park mark Multicultural Arts Festival presents steel bands and dancers from the islands. Noon to 5 pm. Kings Plaza Shopping Center, Kings Plaza at Avenue U. (866) 894-1812. **Free.**

GOPEL BRUNCH: at The Jazz and Comedy Cafe. 1 pm to 5 pm. 408 Rodgers Ave. Call for info. (718) 675-6145.

SING-IN: St. Jacobi hosts a "Messiah" community sing-in. 4 pm. 540 Fulton St. (718) 243-5972.

PROTEUS COWANUS: Artist Nina Katchadourian and author Rick Moody, who both perform in the band The Wriggles Community Singers. They perform an encyclopedic cycle of songs, spoken words and images. \$5, 7 pm. 545 Union St. (718) 243-5972.

OPERA: "Tosca." 3 pm. See Sat., June 9.

BARGE MUSIC: Classical music concert. 4 pm. See Sat., June 9.

OTHER

SALE: hosted by Geliana Chub. 9 am to 2 pm. Warehouse Houses, community room 4c, 2720 West Fifth St. (718) 996-3868.

LIST YOUR EVENT...

To list your event in **Nine Days in Brooklyn**, please give us two weeks notice or more. Send your listing by e-mail: calendar@brooklynpaper.com; by mail: GO Brooklyn, The Brooklyn Paper, 55 Washington St., Suite 624, Brooklyn, NY 11201; or by fax: (718) 834-9278. Listings are free and printed on a space available basis. We regret we cannot take listings over the phone.



Where the wild things are: On June 10, "Wildman" Steve Brill leads an education tour about the edible and medicinal plants and greens found in Prospect Park. We would pack our own lunches anyway.

FLEA MARKET: at Oceanview Jewish Center. 10 am to 5 pm. 3100 Brighton Fourth St. (718) 907-3476.

SUNDANCE AT BAM: Brooklyn Academy of Music presents features, documentaries, a screenplay reading and shorts. \$11, \$7-50 seniors and students. Noon to 9 pm. For program info, visit bam.org/audience or sundance.org.

CRAPT WORKSHOP: Brooklyn Artists Gym presents the topic: "How to Use Your Digital Camera." \$60 fee. Ages 16 and older. 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Also, intro to basic boating. 1 pm to 4 pm. Call for price info, 168 Seventh Ave. (718) 858-9069.

HISTORY CLUB: Salt Marsh Nature Center hosts a talk

"Brooklyn Pizzeria." Tony Mula leads discussion. 1 pm. 3302 Ave. U. For info, call 311. **Free.**

PIER ART SHOW: Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition hosts its 15th annual exhibit entitled "Connections." 1 pm to 6 pm. Event includes music with Charles Gervais' Broken Reed saxophone quartet. 499 Van Brunt St. (718) 596-9113.

SPRING FEST: at St. Athanasios Roman Catholic Church. 6 pm to 11 pm. See Sat., June 9.

PARK SLOPE HISTORY: The Secondary School for Research invites the community to view the Park Slope Historical project created in partnership with the Urban Memory Project. 4 pm to 6 pm. Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Fernport St. Call for info. (718) 832-4324.

POETRY WALK: Poets House presents the 12th annual walk across the Brooklyn Bridge. Poetry readings along the way under

time at 1:30 pm. Dyker Beach Golf Course, Seventh Avenue and 86th Street. (718) 789-1414, ext. 208.

KIDS MOVIES: Big Movies for Little Kids presents "The Magic of Melody." 10:00, \$6, 4 pm. Cobble Hill Cinemas, 256 Court St. (718) 596-9113.

MON, JUNE 11

GOLF OUTING: Title Challenge Brooklyn hosts a charity fundraiser. \$125 per person. Lunch from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm; tee

time at 1:30 pm. Poet Gateway Kennel recites Whittman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry." 7 pm. Park Slope United Methodist Church, Sixth Avenue and Eighth Street, basement entrance. (718) 788-2266. **Free.**

EASY PARENTING: Families First hosts a talk: "Learn How Parents Can Best Work With Their Nannies." \$40, 7:15 pm to 8:15 pm. 250 Balc St. (718) 237-1862.

TUES, JUNE 12

BUSINESS SEMINAR: Church Avenue Merchants Business Association hosts a talk: "Credit Repair and Money Management." 10 am to 4 pm. 884 Flatbush Ave. (718) 282-2500.

FATHERS' DAY PARTY: The Bay Ridge Community Service Center. \$1, 11 am to 2 pm. 6955 Fourth Ave. (718) 748-0650.

SENIOR MEETING: Bay Ridge Chapter of AARP meets. 2:30 pm. Shore Hill Housing, 9000 Shore Rd. (718) 748-9114. **Free.**

FITNESS CLASS: The Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy and the Fitness Guru host a three-part series of fitness classes held in the Empire Fulton Ferry State Park section of Brooklyn Bridge. Tuesday evenings throughout the summer. Today: Snack Down Boot Camp at 7 pm. Registration at 6:30 pm. For info, visit www.brooklynbridgepark.org. **Free.**

READING: Barnes and Noble hosts a reading with Lawrence Light and Meredith Anthony, authors of "Ladykillers." 7 pm. 106 Court St. (718) 264-4956. **Free.**

MOVEMENT WORKSHOP: Brooklyn Artists Exchange offers a five-week workshop in rhythmic movement from the African diaspora. \$70, or \$17 drop-in rate. 7 pm to 8:30 pm. 421 Fifth

Ave. (718) 832-0018. **BROOKLYN LYCEUM:** Mozart and DaPonte's comedy "Così fan Tutte: A School for Lovers." \$15, \$7-30 students and seniors. 7:30 pm. 227 Fourth Ave. (718) 398-7301.

WEDS, JUNE 13

CASTING CALL: Brooklyn Industries is holding auditions for Brooklyn's coolest canine. Top Dog will receive a prize package that includes a photo shoot, a massage and \$250 in gift certificates. 11 am to 3 pm. 162 Bedford Ave. (718) 599-7757.

DINNER SHOW: Bay Ridge Community Service Center hosts a dinner and the show "Falling in Love Again." \$8 includes hot dinner. 8 pm. 6955 Fourth Ave. (718) 748-0650.

DANCE: Thelma Hill Performing Arts Center presents "Urban Dancers" with performances by Creative Outlet, Obesiah Wright and Christine Wright. \$15, \$12 students. 7:30 pm. Long Island University, Kamikaze Theatre, Flatbush and DeKalb avenues. (718) 488-1624.

BROOKLYN AUTHOR: Peter Charles Melman reads from "Landmark." 8 pm. Book Court, 163 Court St. (718) 875-3677. **Free.**

BARGE MUSIC: Classical music concert of works by Beethoven. \$35, \$30 seniors \$20 students. 8 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2083.

THURS, JUNE 14

RHYTHM AND BLUES: Annual musical festival at Metrotech. 1 pm to 5 pm. 1000 Fulton St. (718) 624-2083.

THEATRE: The Commons. (718) 636-4100. **Free.**

SMALL BUSINESS TALK: Brooklyn Public Library's Business branch presents "How to Expand and Grow Your Business," a talk for small business owners. Learn how to write an expansion plan, opportunities for women, library resources and SBA programs and services. 1 pm to 3 pm. 280 Cadman Pl. Reservations required. (718) 693-7810. **Free.**

SUPPORT: Lutheran Medical Center's Surgical Weight Loss Program meets. Lap band patients support from 6 pm to 7 pm; laparoscopic gastric bypass patients meet from 7 pm to 8 pm. Shore Hill Housing, 9000 Shore Rd. (718) 630-8892. **Free.**

RECEPTION: Henry Grogg Gallery presents the exhibit "Jung" a show of works by nine artists. 6 pm to 9 pm. 111 Front St., suite 226. (718) 408-1090. **Free.**

ARTIST TALK: MOXADA Museum presents "The French Evolution: From Picasso to the 2005 Riots." French artist Alexis Pedrine is guest speaker. 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. 80 Hanson Pl. Reservations suggested. (718) 230-0492. **Free.**

PANEL TALK: Young Women's Young Leaders of Hadesah Brooklyn Region hosts a panel of actresses, directors, writers and a casting director. Topic: portrait of Jewish women on film, stage and television. \$25, \$10 seniors. 7 pm. 111 Front St., suite 226. (718) 408-1090. **Free.**

KARAOKE: at Ink Well Jazz Cafe. 7:30 pm. 408 Rodgers Ave. and between Flatbush and Sterling streets. (718) 675-6145.

BARNES AND NOBLE: Reading with George Hagen, author of historical novel "Tom Bealman." 7:30 pm. 247 Seventh Ave. (718) 832-6006. **Free.**

BARGE MUSIC: Jazz with Jeff Newell's New Trio Octet. \$35, \$30 seniors \$20 students. 8 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2083.

SINGLES EVENT: Jerry Rose hosts a bout of Prospect Park at dusk. \$10, 8 pm. For information, email jerry40@yahoo.com.

FRI, JUNE 15

SENIOR CINEMA: Film series for seniors presents "Cotton Comes to Harlem" (1970). 10 am. Rose Cinema at Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4122. **Free.**

GOOD COFFEEHOUSE: Third Friday with the Park Slope Food Coop celebrates Gay Pride. \$10, \$4 kids. 8 pm. Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture, 53 Prospect Park West. (718) 768-2972.

BARGE MUSIC: Classical music concert features works by Bach, Hindemith, Lull and others. \$35, \$30 seniors \$20 students. 8 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2083.

DRAWING SESSION: Workshop features nude female models in short and long poses. \$12, 8 pm to 11 am. Retreat, 147 Front St. Visit www.michaelarant.com.

DARFUR TALK: New York City Council Member David Yosso speaks about his resolution calling upon the Persian Boards of New York City, and New York State's various persons, to divest of any investments made in corporations doing business with Sudan and the genocide in Darfur ends. 6:15 pm. Union Temple, 17 Eastern Pkwy. (718) 638-7600. **Free.**

BAM CAFE: presents Kono Michi band. No cover, no minimum. 9 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4129.

DANCE: The Second Decade: Choreography, Transitions and Parenthood. 8 pm. See Sat., June 16.

SAT, JUNE 16

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

EARLY BIRD WALK: at the Prospect Park Audubon Center. 8 am to 10 am. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400. **Free.**

LULLWATER EXPLORATION: Enjoy a boat tour detailing Prospect Park's aquatic habitat. Binoculars provided. \$10, \$6 kids. Noon to 12:45 pm. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue. (718) 287-3400.

PEDAL BOATING: Cruise Brooklyn's freshwater lake in a pedal boat. \$15 for one hour; plus \$10 re-usable paddle. Noon to 5 pm. Enter Prospect Park near the Parkside and Ocean Avenue entrance. www.prospectpark.org.

TROLLEY TOUR: Urban Park Rangers presents a tour that includes the Old Stone House, Prospect Park, Fort Greene, Green-Wood Cemetery and other historic sites of Brooklyn. 11 am. Meet at J. Byrne Park, Fifth Avenue between Third and Fourth streets. Registration necessary. (718) 421-2021. **Free.**

BRIDGE WALK AT TWILIGHT: Big Onion Tours hosts a walk across the Brooklyn Bridge and through Brooklyn Heights. Learn the neighborhood's history, architecture and people. \$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 students. 5 pm. Meet at southeast corner of Broadway and Chambers streets, lower Manhattan. (212) 439-1090.

PERFORMANCE

BARGE MUSIC: Baruch art concert features works by Shostakovich and Chopin. 1 pm to 3 pm. Classical music concert features same composers. \$35, \$30 seniors \$20 students. 8 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2083.

OPERA: Regina Opera Company performs "1 pm. Brooklyn Public Library, Bay Ridge. 7:23 Ridge Blvd. (718) 236-1760. **Free.**

DANCE: Brooklyn Arts Exchange presents "The Second Decade: Choreography, Transitions and Parenthood." \$15, \$10 seniors. \$8 low income. 8 pm. 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 832-0018.

JAZZ: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church hosts an evening of jazz by Thos Shipley. 6 pm. Fourth Avenue between 74th and 75th streets. (718) 745-8520. **Free.**

DANCE: Thelma Hill Performing Arts Center presents "Aude Louise in Motion." \$15, \$12 students. 7:30 pm. Long Island University, Kamikaze Theatre, Flatbush and DeKalb avenues. (718) 488-1624.

BAM CAFE: presents rhythms and blues with Russell Taylor and Leonaara Joy. No cover, no minimum. 9 pm. 30 Lafayette Ave. (718) 636-4129.

OTHER

ARTISANS MARKET: Featuring functional and collectible. 9 am to 6 pm. DeKalb Avenue sidewalk. Flatbush and Sterling streets. (718) 858-8175. **Free.**

FLEA MARKET: Vintage Hill hosts its annual flea market featuring everything from furniture to cupcakes. 11 am to 4 pm. From Front Street to Water Street and Bridge Street to Hudson Avenue. (Sorry, no contact phone number).

INDE MARKET: Collective of Brooklyn-based emerging designers show their wares of fashion, accessories, bath and more. 11 am to 7 pm. Smith and Union streets. www.brooklynindemarket.com.

ARTIST TALK: Brooklyn Public Library's Brooklyn Heights branch presents "Edward Munch: The Modern Life of the Soul." 1 pm to 2 pm. Participants receive a free pass to visit the Museum of Modern Art, NYC. 280 Cadman Plaza West. (718) 623-7100. **Free.**

PIER ART SHOW: Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition hosts its 15th annual exhibit entitled "Connections." 1 pm to 6 pm. Event includes music with Julie Milgram jazz pianist. 499 Van Brunt St. (718) 596-2506. **Free.**

ARTIST TALK: Sunlight Gallery presents Middle Eastern artists in an expression of peace and humanity in "Cultural Interpretations." Exhibit presents paintings, drawings, mosaics and more. 6 pm to 8 pm. 1368 Fulton St. (718) 634-9978. **Free.**

BENEFIT: Old Stone House hosts a fundraiser featuring "South Side Stories," with Capella Jenkins and Louis Rosen. \$30, 8 pm. Champagne reception follows. Fifth Avenue between Third and Fourth streets. (718) 288-4200.

SUN, JUNE 17

Father's Day PERFORMANCE

BARGE MUSIC: All Beethoven classical music concert. \$35, \$30 seniors \$20 students. 4 pm. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2083.

OTHER

CRAPT WORKSHOP: Brooklyn Artists Gym presents the topic: "How to Use Your Digital Camera." \$60 fee. Ages 16 and older. 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm. 168 Seventh Ave. (718) 858-9069.

PIER ART SHOW: Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition concludes its 15th annual exhibit entitled "Connections." 1 pm to 6 pm. Silent auction. 499 Van Brunt St. (718) 596-2506. **Free.**

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OUR OPINION

City wrong on vendors



A vendor in Red Hook Park.

IT IS COMPLETELY UNDERSTANDABLE that food lovers went bananas this week after reports that the city was planning to kick a dozen or so Latin American food vendors from their longtime positions around the ballfields of Red Hook Park.

The vendors are a cherished part of urban life — a tradition that sprang up organically, not because someone did a focus group for a large corporation.

The good news is that the early reports of the vendors' demise were a bit overblown. The city isn't kicking the vendors out of Red Hook Park.

But what the Parks Department is doing is no less worrisome. The agency — trotting out that old bureaucratic canard, namely, the need to replace a longstanding informal permitting process with a standard city process — will now put the vendors' spaces up for open bid.

The resulting bidding war could end up costing these mom and pop vendors thousands of dollars more than the roughly \$600 they each pay every season to keep their spots. And that's if they win the bidding war at all.

In Manhattan, open bidding means that some hot dog stand operators pay upwards of \$320,000 for a

high-traffic space, such as the plaza at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Certainly, that won't happen in Red Hook. The Parks Department is confident that the existing vendors will be the only bidders for the site and that their permits will probably cost what they do now.

But why leave it up to the market to decide the value of those permits — especially since it was the vendors, setting up shop decades ago near one of the city's most-dangerous housing projects, who created the very value that the city now hopes to exploit?

That's a persistent story all over Brooklyn right now. Whether on Wiloughby Street in Downtown, where a developer is evicting longtime tenants to build a skyscraper, or in Red Hook, the story line is the same: hard-working people who built up neighborhoods that had been written off by the media interests are the first to be kicked to the curb when those moored interests suddenly get interested again.

In the case of the Red Hook vendors, at least, the city has a chance to get it right: Sell the vendors a permit, at a reasonable price, and let this wonderful tradition continue.

ALL DRAWN OUT



LETTERS

Sen. Golden not pleased with Alpine coverage

To the editor,

In response to your recent article concerning the Alpine Theater ("Bad reviews for Alpine," May 26), I think that it is important to recognize that it was about one year ago that the last movie theater in our community was about to go dark, allowing for condos or mixed-use development at this famed location.

With little time left, Nicolas Nicolaou, a respected independent theater owner, took a financially losing operation and made it work.

Nick, a serious businessman, has a first-rate vision for this theater. He has already made important changes and has applied for the necessary permits to make additional ones.

Business improvements take time and do not simply happen overnight.

I think we would all agree that the Alpine Theater shows first-run movies and continues to gain in prominence as a grand theater that draws large crowds.

The Alpine Theater is a clean and safe one that I frequent regularly with my family, to enjoy an afternoon or evening and see the latest movies on the big screen.

Knowing that Mr. Nicolaou has the commitment to make the Alpine a five-star theater, and seeing the planned renovations moving forward, I am confident that the Alpine will continue to operate for many years to come.

The Brooklyn Paper should remain patient. I am confident you will see more great

things happening at the Alpine Theater.

Martin J. Golden, Bay Ridge
The writer is a Republican state Senator from Bay Ridge.

Short memories

To the editor,

I was disappointed at the relatively low turnout of onlookers at the Memorial Day parade in Bay Ridge, especially since we are at war.

I wonder what the turnout of protesters would be if the draft were to be reinstated. It's a shame that so few are carrying so many.

Thank you for your consideration.

Deborah Matlack, Bay Ridge

Ratner's myth

To the editor,

You recently printed a letter from Alvin Pinkin, who was commenting about a photograph previously published in The Paper ("Thank Ratner," May 26).

Mr. Pinkin spent the first paragraph saying good riddance to the three buildings in that photograph that Forest City Ratner has demolished in the Atlantic Yards project site.

In the second paragraph, Mr. Pinkin, in a non-sequitur, trotted out the most-invidious mythological talking point that Mr. Ratner's supporters use against critics of the project — that they are "new arrivals."

This is an insidious myth, first because it couldn't be more false. Having spent the past three plus years working with project opponents and critics who favor sensible development, I can say with assurance that most have deep generational roots in the borough, or have lived here a significant amount of time.

Also, some of the most fervent project opponents trace their Brooklyn roots back for centuries.

The myth is also insidious because there is no eligibility barometer to civic discourse. But to peruse Sen. Steven Johnson, this sort of mythmaking is always the last refuge of those without a substantive argument.

On another point, Mr. Pinkin may not have liked what the now-demolished buildings looked like, but they once housed residential tenants and successful businesses.

Now they are rubble-strewn empty lots.

Daniel Goldstein, Prospect Heights
The writer is a spokesman for Developer Don't Destroy Brooklyn.

Marty's 'purge'

To the editor,

I was outraged to read in your paper that Borough President Markowitz purged members of local community boards who voted against Bruce Ratner's Atlantic Yards project.

What does he think this is, a Soviet Republic?

It's bad enough that he's been Ratner's

waterboy, naming Atlantic Yards down our throats without holding Ratner accountable for solving the very real questions of transit and traffic.

Now, Markowitz is erasing any semblance of community voice.

Ratner may get his project built — Marty and his Tammany Hall buddies in Albany have seen to that — but Marty has cost himself the critical support of Brownstone Brooklyn with this outrage.

I will personally mobilize my block association and grassroots networks to run him out of town on a rail.

Scott Powell, Park Slope

Nipple heirs

To the editor,

I read your story about the new nipple hair champion ("Williamsburg man's strand nips the competition," June 2), but have to tell you that I have a hair on my right nipple that is over six inches long!

I am in the process of deciding whether to even bother printing out the forms from the Guinness Book of World Records, as I am sure someone with an even longer one will come forward shortly.

I blame genetically modified food and shower scrunches.

I have documentary photos that can be viewed at <http://totaldismiss.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/05/nnt.JPG>

Martin Higgins, Gozo, Malta

To the editor,

I just read the article about the world's longest nipple hair. It was really interesting.

Now, I'm just curious: what's the world's longest chest hair, because I have one which is unusually longer than others. It is about seven inches long.

If it's really an unusual one, I want to share it with people.

Please let me know if it is a unusual one.

J. Oh, Chicago

To the editor,

I think it's appalling that you ran a front-page story about the man with the nipple hair.

How could you put that in the paper?

I think you should do newsworthy stories, like all the graffiti in Bay Ridge.

Your paper is like the Enquirer!

Name withheld, Bay Ridge

Pushing pedals

To the editor,

I am happy to hear that we are taking our "walking city" to a new level ("On board with bikes," editorial, May 26). Not only is New York City the entertainment capital of the world, but is also gearing towards a healthy and energy efficient capital as well.

Also, the fact that more bike lanes are being made to enhance the safety of bikers just makes this concept more of a reality.

Now, maybe in the future — bike ports at subway stations?

Kenneth T. Akama, Fort Greene

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Every week, we deliver copies of The Brooklyn Paper to homes throughout Brownstone Brooklyn. Our unique system limits deliveries to just a few papers per building (eliminating the kind of clutter caused by circular and menu delivery services).

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By fax: (718) 834-9278.

All letters must be signed and include the writer's home address and phone number (only the writer's name and neighborhood are published with the letter). Letters may be edited and will not be returned. The earlier in the week you send your letter, the better.

Seeking a Balance in Education

By Randi Weingarten

Lots of people have been asking why, if the schools were doing so well, would the system need a third major reorganization in five years? Many questions were raised; some in public rallies and town meetings and some in print. The mayor listened and that's why a coalition of parents, teachers and community groups recently reached an agreement with the city that addressed some of our key reservations.

Although things are constantly changing, this is what the agreement did:

On the plus side, Mayor Michael Bloomberg agreed to change the new school budget formula to ensure that schools that do well will not lose funds for at least the next two years — and schools with large numbers of poor or special-needs children will receive additional resources.

A particularly big plus is that class sizes should start to shrink, helped largely by an infusion of resources from the settlement of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity court case. This is something New York City public schools have needed for a long time and it is heartening to see that Gov. Eliot Spitzer's administration recognizes this need.

Also, in response to coalition complaints about parents and educators being excluded from the decision-making process, the Department of Education has created committees that should allow parents and other stakeholders to offer views on crucial policy matters such as class size reduction and school funding. In addition, parents, educators and students are completing a system-wide survey of their own schools.

Other benefits include an agreement to create a pilot program focusing attention and resources on middle schools, a parent engagement committee to bolster school leadership teams and a commitment from the chancellor to maintain teacher tenure standards.

These changes are significant improvements in the original proposed reorganization.

Yet, we are still concerned that too much responsibility has been shifted to the principals from the central bureaucracy and that federal and state regulations still require excessive testing. Students must take math, English and science tests in third-through-eighth grade — and Regents exams in high school. This has been augmented by the new system-wide report card. As a result, teachers must commit huge amounts of time to paperwork involving student assessments.

A new survey by the United Federation of Teachers shows educators spend nearly five hours and 15 minutes of class time a week — equal to 1 1/4 days of classroom instruction — on mandated paperwork involving student assessments. Some 89% of those surveyed said they had more assessment-related

paperwork than before.

Preparing students to take so many high-stakes tests consumes a great deal of classroom instruction time. In both elementary and secondary schools, 89% of teachers said their schools devote significant class time to test preparation activities. Elementary school teachers said they begin preparing for high-stakes reading and math tests about 7 1/2 weeks, on average, before the tests. During that time they spend close to eight hours per week — almost a third of their weekly teaching time — on test preparation, taking time away from core subjects like social studies, the arts and physical education.

Middle and high school teachers said they begin preparing for tests almost seven weeks ahead of time and 70% said they spend at least half of each teaching period on test preparation. With so much time devoted to test prep, teaching and learning in the classroom can't help but suffer.

So the reorganization is indeed a mixed bag, but parents can rest assured that we in the coalition will do our best to make it work for the sake of our children.

The partnership formed by educators, parents and the community around this issue might be the strongest in New York's history. Given that the coalition members share the goal of providing our kids with the best education possible, we hope to build on our momentum and be a public force on behalf of our schools and our students.

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A gas leak is usually recognized by smell (a distinctive, pungent odor similar to rotten eggs), sight (a white cloud, blowing dust, mist or bubbles in standing water) or sound (an unusual roaring, hissing or whistling).

Respond properly to gas leaks and other pipeline emergencies.

Do not smoke or operate electric switches, appliances or equipment. Do not attempt to locate the leak. Do not use any phones near the leak. Move to a safe environment. Call KeySpan Energy Delivery immediately at 1.718.643.4050. Do not assume someone else will report the condition.

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The Brooklyn Paper

KIDS • SCHOOL • STYLE • TEENS • CAMPS • MUSIC

Smartmom is going on a diet

FAMILY CALENDAR

The Wildlife Players perform on weekends at the zoo in Prospect Park.

SAT, JUNE 9
10:30 am-12:30 pm: Zoo puppet show. The Wildlife Players perform at Prospect Park Zoo (450 Flatbush Ave., at Empire Boulevard), free. Call (718) 399-7339 for info.
11 am: Improv for kids. Gallery Players (199 14th St., between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Park Slope), adults, \$8; parents free. Call (718) 595-0547 for info.
11 am: Reading and signing by author/illustrator Melissa Iwai. Barnes and Noble (106 Court St., at State Street in Brooklyn Heights), free. Call (718) 264-4996 for info.
11 am: Magic show. Uncle Rocco, a children's magician, performs at Mott (222 N. 12th St., between Driggs and Union avenues in Williamsburg), \$10. Call (718) 486-6312 or visit www.uncleocco.com for info.
11:30 am-12:30 pm: Films for toddlers. Brooklyn Children's Museum (145 Brooklyn Ave., at St. Marks Avenue in Crown Heights), free. Call (718) 735-4400 for info.
Noon-1 pm: Street fair. Emerson Place, between Myrtle and Willoughby avenues, free. Call (718) 436-1463 for info.
Noon and 1:30 pm: Gallery talk. Brooklyn Museum (200 Eastern Pkwy., at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights), adults, \$8; kids and seniors, \$4. Call (718) 638-5000 for info.
12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: "Jungle Book" puppet show. Puppeteers (338 5th Ave., at 4th St. in Park Slope), 57 children, 50 adults. Call (718) 965-3391 for reservations.
1 pm: Kids film festival. Brooklyn Children's Museum (145 Brooklyn Ave., at St. Marks Avenue in Crown Heights), 47 children, 50 adults. Call (718) 965-3391 for reservations.
1:15-1:55 pm: Dive ride. Prospect Park Bathhouse (located at Ocean Avenue and Lincoln Road), adults, \$10; children, \$6. Brochures provided. Call (718) 287-3400 for info.
1:30 pm: Postcard exhibit. New York City Transit Museum (corner of Boerum Place and Schermerhorn Street, in Brooklyn Heights), adults, \$5; kids, \$3. Call (718) 694-1455 for info.
7:30 pm: Dance performance. BAM Arts Theater (80 Lafayette Ave., at 4th St. in Park Slope), adults, \$22; kids, \$12. Call (718) 522-4696 for info.

IT'S BEEN A BIT MORE than a week and Smartmom hasn't had General Tso's chicken from Hunan De-light, a slice of whole-wheat pizza from Pino's or a buttery croissant from Cousin John's.

She hasn't eaten even one M&M or thought about ordering a cheeseburger deluxe from Grand Canyon.

It's been salad, salad, and more salad, which is pretty boring. But that's OK, because Smartmom has to lose weight and she has to lose it bad.

On Sunday morning, Smartmom even let Diaper Diva convince her to join the Weight Watchers' meeting at the Montauk Club.

Smartmom is a lifetime member of Weight Watchers. She joined in 1998 to lose those pesky post-pregnancy pounds that just refused to go away.

But then, she attended the Wednesday meeting at the American Legion Hall on Ninth Street — a far cry from the elegant second-floor ballroom at the Montauk Club. At that meeting, the women would strip down to shorts and t-shirts in the ballroom before their weigh-in.

Smartmom got very attached to that meeting's leader, a Catholic schoolteacher from Bay Ridge with a great sense of humor.

She'd lost 100 pounds and had managed to keep it off for years by avoiding "muffins the size of your head."

Once Smartmom reached her goal weight, which took about five months, she stopped going. She remembers her first summer after the weight loss.

Ah. The joy of not having her body (OK, she still hated it) at the front of her mind.

But it was such fun trying to swim, mini-kits and sexy leggings.

After September 11, however, Smartmom started putting the weight back on. It was from all the comfort food and wine she put into her body in an ill-fated attempt to feel better during the worst of times.

A couple of years later, she decided to try Zoloft. At first, she lost some weight and ran the Brooklyn half-marathon (13 miles from Coney Island to Prospect Park). But after the race, she couldn't fit into her pants.

She couldn't fit into her usual size of jeans, her usual size of dress, her usual size of...

W EIGHT GAIN IS A very common side effect of Zoloft. But Smartmom didn't feel like switching to another anti-depressant because she liked the new, less irritable Smartmom.

But it quickly became a problem when the anti-depressant starts to make you depressed every time you step on the scale. Something had to give — either she had to limit her portion sizes of pastel-colored cocktails, Mallomars, and Haagen Dazs, or she had to turn up her prescription.

She kept the pills — and also gained 15 pounds.

The other night, Smartmom came home from her writer's

group and found herself huffing and puffing as she reached the third-floor landing.

"I'm concerned about you," Hepcat said when he saw that she was out of breath.

"What do you mean?" Smartmom asked.

"I'm concerned about your health."

"My health?" she said.

"I don't want you to suddenly drop dead," he said.

Boot Camp Challenge

The Brooklyn Paper

Our classified sales manager Adam E. Sherry is undertaking the "Boot Camp Challenge," a grueling, three-week workout regimen set up by two personal trainers in a DUMBO park.

Every week, he'll give us an update on how he's doing.

Day 1: June 4

Today was the first day of the rest of my healthy life and does it hurt? Not physically... the first "session" was merely an

assessment. But my numbers tell a horrific story:

Age 26, Weight: 200 (no more!)

Goal Weight: 125; Waist: 46 inches

Hips: 48 inches; Thighs: 26.12 inches

Body Fat: 27 percent

A simple mile took me 15 minutes (plus!). After two miles of as many "real" push-ups as I could do (five, by the way) and two minutes of sit-ups (37), I felt like I was being drowned.

But good news: My goals are clearer. I need to boost my stamina, lose some weight and gain some muscle tone.

I also started my nicotine supplement program, and so far it's working. I'm personally using the Commit Lozenges (I love their slogan: Commit to quit!).

It's early yet, but I believe change is possible. Root me on!

Day 2: June 6

I threw up. "Nuff said."

SMART mom

By Louise Crawford

Smartmom was furious. Deep down she knew that he was trying to be nice (maybe). But his so-called concern made her feel like the fat lady at the circus with a triple chin and calves like boops. She felt like she was living life on the verge of cardiac arrest.

As usual, Hepcat said the wrong thing. And Smartmom wouldn't forgive him. No matter how many times he tried to explain. She went straight to bed and faced away from Hepcat for the entire night. He's the one she thought, who never exercises and has a potbelly.

The next morning, Smartmom decided it was time to get healthy. No butter, no cheese, no donuts, and no gelato. And she knew she could lose the weight because she'd done it before. And once Smartmom makes get her mind...

On Sunday morning, as Smartmom got ready to meet Diaper Diva at the 10:30 Weight Watchers meeting, the Oh So Feisty One asked if she could come along. This made Smartmom nervous. What if she gets the wrong idea? What if she decides that she wants to be supersized thin?

But then you wouldn't be you," OSFO said simply. And it was the sweetest thing Smartmom had ever heard.

OSFO spotted Ducky and Diaper Diva off in the distance and ran over to them. She'd had enough of Smartmom's true confessions and it was time to play. Smartmom was proud that her girl has a good head on her shoulders.

SMARTMOM WENT up to greet her girl, who was sketched-out like Calista Flockhart or sleeky Antonia like Uma Thurman. She just wanted to be a healthier and more beautiful version of herself. That's why she was at the Montauk Club on a Sunday morning staring at an unspeakably high number on the scale.

Yikes. But Smartmom was OK with it. She bought a Monthly Pass and a Starter Kit, which included a three-month eating journal. That's why she was at the Montauk Club on a Sunday morning staring at an unspeakably high number on the scale.

Anyone want to go out for pizza to celebrate?

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want their daughters to spend the rest of their lives wanting to be as thin as Kate Moss.

One friend is worried because her daughter has stopped eating breakfast and lunch. Another friend's daughter is on diet to lose 10 pounds and she's already razor thin.

TILL ANOTHER MOM worries that her daughter is overweight but she doesn't know what to say. And then there's Mrs. Cleavage, who is worried that her 9-year-old son doesn't know how to tell when his stomach is full.

So there's a whole lot of worry out there and confusion abounds. Smartmom wants OSFO to feel good about her looks. At all times. Without end.

Maybe Smartmom should just relax. No one is really sure what causes eating disorders anyway. It tends to strike between the ages of 14 and 18. Some researchers think it's about control. During puberty, girls (and boys) feel like they don't have much control over their lives. By controlling their own bodies, they regain some control — even if it is done in an unhealthy way.

Smartmom decided that it was time to tell OSFO the truth. "I've never liked my body very much," Smartmom told her.

"What don't you like about it?" OSFO asked.

"Well, my belly is like Bluto. My upper arms are flabby. I guess I wish I had a different body sometimes."

But then you wouldn't be you," OSFO said simply. And it was the sweetest thing Smartmom had ever heard.

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Change of a

Parks sorry for censoring students

By Dana Rubinstein

A city commissioner has apologized to a group of Brooklyn College art students for ordering the removal of what he deemed "inappropriate" artwork from a war memorial last May, an incident that ignited free-speech activists, and provoked a First Amendment lawsuit.

As part of that lawsuit's settlement this week, the city paid the students' \$400,000 legal bill and gave each of the 19 litigants \$750. In addition, Parks Department Borough Commissioner Julius Spiegel issued a contrite apology.

"I apologize to the Brooklyn College art students who spent long hours and considerable effort in creating their artwork and in mounting their exhibition at the Brooklyn Memorial site," read the apology, printed on Parks Department letterhead.

Spiegel's long-awaited apology puts a happy ending on a saga that began after he shut down the students' exhibition in the World War II Memorial in Cadman Plaza Park claiming to be acting on behalf of veterans, who would supposedly have been offended by artwork that included a sculpture of a hand holding a penis and a painting depicting a homosexual encounter between the artist and Dick Cheney.

Spiegel's move sparked student protests and, ultimately, a lawsuit filed on their and their professor's behalf by First Amendment lawyer Norman Siegel.

Spiegel's apology claimed that he "had no role in the removal and subsequent damage to Plaintiffs' artwork," but admitted that he was responsible "for ordering the closing of the Plaintiffs' art exhibit."

Marti Kotak, one of the artist's whose work was removed, said she was "very happy with the statement from the city. It's really strong."

"We're hoping that it will somehow deter future violations of student artists' First Amendment rights," added Kotak.

Checkin' in ... Rabbi Potasnik

The Brooklyn Paper

Rabbi Joseph Potasnik has stuck with Brooklyn for 35 years, leading Congregation Mt. Sinai in Brooklyn Heights. The only child of Holocaust survivors, Potasnik not only counts his congregants as his extended family, but also has a spiritual connection to New York's firefighters, serving for many years as the FDNY's their Jewish chaplain.

On the eve of Wednesday night's 35th anniversary celebration, Potasnik talked to The Brooklyn Paper about his relationship with firefighters, his secret "addiction," the special thing he did for Borough President Markowitz and why synagogues should be like Starbucks.

Q: Are you originally from Brooklyn, or did you move here?

A: No, I was born in Boston.

Home of the 2004 champions, the Boston Red Sox, and home to the 2007 champions, the Boston Red Sox.

Q: Well, you're not talking to a Yankees fan, so don't worry about it. When did you come to Brooklyn?

A: I came to New York when I went to school at Yeshiva University in 1964. I graduated in 1972 and came to my first, and last, congregation, Mount Sinai.

Q: What has kept you with Mount Sinai? Thirty-five years is a long time.

A: I came to the congregation, and the rabbi who preceded me, said to me, "We do not have a rich congregation, we have a wealthy congregation."

The congregation has treated me like a member of their extended family. It was love at first sight. It has transcended a professional relationship.

I often say to other rabbis, because I am the executive director of the New York Board of Rabbis, "I wish you the kind of people I have in my congregation."

Q: On a more personal note, where do you like to go in Brooklyn? Do you have a favorite coffee shop in Brooklyn Heights?

A: I'm a Starbucks addict. Sugar-free, vanilla, skim latte is the drink of choice. We ought to create synagogues that feel like Starbucks. You know, when you walk into a Starbucks, it is very warm and welcoming. You walk in there and you feel like no one is going to pressure you into doing anything.

Q: Is there anything else that really connects you with Brooklyn?

A: Mary Markowitz. I did his wedding. His wife still hasn't forgiven me for that.

Q: I also understand that you are the Jewish chaplain to the FDNY. How has that experience been?

A: Firefighters are the most religious people, religious in the humanistic way. They are selfless souls. Of course, 9-11 was the most defining moment with regard to the greatness of that department. People appreciated the heroism before that, but not the depth.

Quick story — there was a young boy, 7 or 8 years old; he had cancer and he was part of the Make-A-Wish program. His wish was to be an honorary firefighter.

About a year ago there was that huge fire in Greenpoint, and the firefighters made sure that they came back from the

fire in Greenpoint for the ceremony, because they wanted to make sure that boy received that special honor.

Q: But how many Jewish boys were firefighters when they grew up?

A: Contrary to popular belief, there are a lot of Jewish firefighters. I know I wanted to be one when I grew up, just like every other kid.

Q: But you became a lawyer and a rabbi. That's nice for your mother.

A: Yes, it is.

By Eric Bennett

The Brooklyn Paper

The scoreboard may have read 6-2, but a group of punchy, punchy and pusillanimous veteran Brooklyn Cyclones reporters clearly won last Sunday's charity game against the team's front office.

How's that for the first draft of history?

As expected, the Scribes got on the board first, scoring two runs in the top of the first, capped by a run-scoring double to deep left field by Patrick Healy.

The fact that Healy's drive would have been an inside-the-park homer had he been wearing his oxygen tank did not diminish the feeling that the Scribes were going to win in a walkover.

And why not? After all, this midnight game was the fifth of eight straight contests that the Cyclones' front office would play in a 24-hour marathon of baseball to raise money for two Coney Island charities, the Salt & Sea Mission Church and Reaching Out Community Services.

A team of clowns — no, really, they were clowns — from King Henry Entertainment and others — the "Clones front office before the Scribes took the field, leaving the Cyclones' sluggish, disoriented and ripe for the taking.

True, Scribes starting pitcher

Good times: Phenom Eric Bennett scored the game's first run, and the Scribes appeared to be on a roll.

Hero cop back

Shot officer returns to 78

By Beethoven Bong

for The Brooklyn Paper

Officer Andrew Suarez made a triumphant — though not quite complete — return to duty at the 78th Precinct this week, nearly four months after he was shot while on patrol.

The four-year NYPD vet is expected to do administrative work within the safe precinct walls before he's healthy enough to make a full return — but he's thrilled to be back where the action is, even in a limited capacity.

"I like to be active, not stagnant, so it felt good [to return]," said Suarez. "It felt like it was my first day when I started and it was nice to see everybody."

His fellow officers' concern for their comrade dates back to Feb. 10, when Suarez was shot while sitting in an unmarked van on Prospect Park and Sixth Avenue with three other plain-clothes officers.

The NYPD said that ex-con José Rivera — himself the husband of an NYPD officer — peered into the van and said, "You n—s got beef," before he fired two shots.

One of the rounds struck Suarez underneath his bulletproof vest and got lodged in his neck.

He underwent surgery at New York Methodist Hospital in Park Slope and was released the same week to the thunderous applause of his colleagues.

Since then, Suarez had been home recuperating — and clapping "get back on the horse" as he put it. He's not all the way back, but it's only a matter of time, said his CO.

"When I'm told he's 100 percent, [then Suarez will go back to full duty]," said Capt. John Argenziano, commander of the 78th Precinct.

Suarez's return was coupled with a spanking of holy water

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Robert Redford (right) with Sally Field and BAM president Karen Brooks-Hopkins last week.

(Boro) President's men

Septuagenarian actor Robert Redford rode into town last week for his Sundance Institute's opening night at the Brooklyn Academy of Music — and promptly learned that he looks like the Borough President Markowitz.

"People tell me all the time that I look like Robert Redford," Markowitz said in his opening remarks, welcoming the Oscar winner and international heartthrob.

Markowitz added that he's been increasingly mistaken for the film auteur thanks to his 25-pound weight loss since last year.

When it was his turn to speak, Redford said he hadn't yet been mistaken for Markowitz, but it may soon happen. "Marty said he lost 25 pounds to look like me," the mutineer said last week before the opening night movie, "The Son of Rambow." "I've been working to put on weight."

How else do Bob and Marty compare? See our handy chart:

Marty Markowitz	Legend	Robert Redford
62	Age	70
179 lbs. (down from 204 lbs. in June of 2006)	Weight	"Marty said he's lost 25 pounds to look like me." Redford said last week, "I have been working to put on weight."
Thinks it's a great proposal.	Stance on Atlantic Yards	Unknown, but he once starred in "Indecent Proposal."
Has been Brooklyn Borough President since 2002.	Political career	Played a Senate hopeful in 1972's "The Candidate."
Proud owner of Beep, a 6-year-old parrot	Friend of animals?	Starred in "Charlotte's Web," "The Horse Whisperer" and "Legal Eagles."

Cyclones beat up on old writers

By Eric Bennett

The Brooklyn Paper

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Mark Healy didn't have his best stuff — or, frankly, any stuff — allowing the Cyclones to answer back with three runs in the home first. The front office would add single runs in the third, fifth and sixth innings while the Scribes stranded runners all night long.

But why dwell on misfortunes when you can accentuate positives like the timing of the park's diving stabs at shortstop, first baseman (and Brooklyn Paper Editor) Gersh "Okru" Kuntzman's over-the-shoulder, Willie Mays-style catch in shallow right field, or Paper reporter Nick Pauly's laser-sharp relay throw from left field to home to cut down a Cyclones' runner?

And why mention Kuntzman's three anemic pop-ups to first? And why bring up his error on a ground ball? (Why? Because it's fun, that's why.)

Manager (and Paper columnist) Ed Shakespeare declared, "I'm proud of my boys," as the final out was recorded at 2 a.m. The Scribes received a standing ovation (though it may have simply been the fans' rush to the restrooms).

And while the Cyclones had to

keep playing, the Scribes passed the bat for charity and then went out and got drunk.

"We played hard, we played smart and we had fun, so I can't say anything more from my players," Shakespeare said. "Now, who's buying at Pique or Nello's?"



Bad times: Bennett took the loss hard. Real hard.

Dem Bums' last season

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Brooklyn Dodgers' final, dismal campaign, The Brooklyn Paper will provide a weekly reminder of the fabled Boys of Summer. Here's this week's highlight:

June 14, 1957 Dodgers 2-St. Louis 1 (10 innings)

Junior Gilliam stole home in the bottom of the 10th to give Don Newcombe his fifth win of the season, a complete game.



Junior Gilliam stole home in the bottom of the 10th to give Don Newcombe his fifth win of the season, a complete game.

VENDORS ON THE HOOK...

Continued from page 1

areas like Red Hook can be as low as \$600, the agency said.

The Parks Department move, originally reported by New York Magazine and others as the death knell for the cheap taco and the people who sell them, set off a firestorm of outrage that went far beyond the vendors' Red Hook base.

Food bloggers posted online petitions and an e-mail address for Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe, urging readers to write the commission to complain.

And neighborhood Web sites were bristling with the news.

"It would be shameful and spectacularly shortsighted if the Parks Department allows some mediocre commercial vendor to push out this invaluable cultural asset," said Park Slope writer David Shenk, who is partial to buranitos that he gets at the Red Hook balfollies.

The open-bidding process, Carlos Fuentes said, he understood the Parks Department's position, but was concerned that a big corporation would swoop in and displace the 15 or so food merchants.

"We've been paying close to \$10,000 for many years and we found it quite reasonable," Fuentes said, referring to a Giuliani-era rule change that required paid permits.

"But I don't know why this is happening now. I can't help but think there is some other hand at work. We ask the Parks Depart-

ment what is going on and we're told, 'It's not us. It's the city.'"

He found the timing of the open-bidding process particularly ironic, given that his vendors set up shop across from one of the city's largest housing projects long before anyone with money — including developers, real-estate brokers, upper-class culinary tourists, toy bankers and restaurateurs — ever went to Red Hook.

"Now that we've made the area safe and attractive, they'll come to see us," he said. "If we're not careful, that is."

Adrian Benepe disputed the widely held no-

tion that an open bidding process would lead to the eviction of the vendors.

"No one else has called us to express an interest," he said. "And if there are other bidders, we will look favorably on the fact that this group has been here for 30 years."

The "request for proposals" that the Parks Department will soon put out will not specify a dollar amount for the permits, Abrahamson added.

At least one food vendor said he's not interested in making a bid.

"That area is Siberia," said Bill Castoro, general manager of New York One, which owns vending permits throughout Manhattan. "A permit there should cost at the very low end of the scale."

"Everyone says Red Hook is 'up and coming,' but that's only true for restaurants and bars and maybe even apartments," Castoro added. "But even if up-and-coming people move to Red Hook, they'll eat at restaurants, not at sidewalk vendors."

The target audience for the vendors, of course, is the Latin American soccer players and their families and fans, who compete throughout the weekend. For more than a dozen years, the food vendors have outshone the futbol, with eaters breathlessly awaiting "opening day" like baseball fans long for "pitchers and catchers." Several bloggers compete to post the first sighting of the vendors in May.

The Brooklyn Paper

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